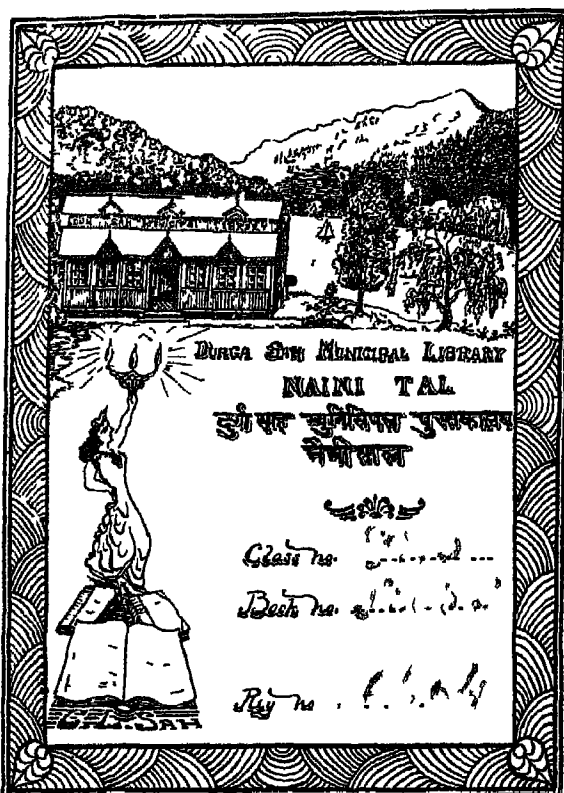




STUDENTS of modern India and its political evolution during the last sixty years will find this volume a mine of information. While histories of this crucial period are available, very few of the main participants in the events culminating in the attainment of Indian independence have provided the historian and the student with personal accounts of their activities and experiences. This first volume of Dr. M. R. Jayakar's memoirs, covering the years 1873 to 1922, i.e. up to the period following the 1921 Ahmedabad Congress, the Viceroy's offer of immediate provincial autonomy and the Report of the Civil Disobedience Committee (1922), will, therefore, be widely welcomed. The general reader too will find the narrative an absorbing one, dealing as it does with historic events and the personalities that shaped them.

It is impossible in this short note to give any adequate idea of the vast canvas these memoirs cover but a mention of some of the highlights might convey something of its dimensions: the devastating plague epidemic; studies in England (with interesting sidelights on the British way of life); practice at the Bombay Bar; historic trials (Tilak, Savarkar, Paranjpe, Bhopatkar, Kanhere); Congress sessions from 1905 onwards; the Bombay Municipal Cor-

poration in the days of Pherozeshah Mehta; pioneering social, religious and educational reforms in Bombay; the two Home Rule Leagues; the Swarajya Party; the Jallianwala Bagh events and the Congress Enquiry Committee of which Dr. Jayakar was a member along with Gandhiji; the Civil Disobedience Movement and its consequences; the triumph of Gandhiji's leadership in the Congress; the Horniman deportation; services to the Pathare Prabhu Community; the world of Indian classical music and the Marathi stage.

There are numerous deft sketches of personalities like Rufus Isaacs (Lord Reading), Ranji, Shyamji Krishna Varma, B. G. Tilak, G. K. Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta, Jaganath Shankarseth, Bhau Daji and Mrs. Annie Besant, but special mention must be made of the brilliant, full-scale pen-portraits of Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Abbas Tyabji.

Dr. Jayakar proposes to complete his memoirs in four volumes.

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

VOLUME ONE

1873-1922



M. R. JAYAKAR

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MY LIFE

VOLUME ONE

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To
the memory of
MY MOTHER

Preface

The Story of My Life is a narrative of events recording the history of the Indian "Freedom Movement" as I knew it in my time. For the expression "Freedom Movement" I am indebted to treatises published by or under the auspices of the present party in power. I would like, however, to add, with due respect, that these official publications, if I may call them so, disclose, with insufficient clarity, the historic truth that the Indian "Freedom Movement" began much earlier than the date suggested in these publications as the commencement.

One of India's earliest efforts at freedom, proved by the authentic testimony of writers, Indian as well as British, was in the year 1857. It was then that India, mainly with the support of the war-like fighting elements in the country, made a heroic endeavour to throw off the British yoke. It is now practically admitted that it was an effort to obtain freedom for India and not only a mutiny of the Sepoys. But, it is truthful to observe that the generality of the people of India kept aloof from this movement, with the result that the upheaval did not take the form of a general rising of the people of India. In consequence of this weakness, the British power succeeded in quelling the movement. The desire, however, for freedom which that rising had engendered, continued unabated despite the failure to attain the immediate object then in view.

This failure, as also a hopeful future, was typically foreshadowed by the proud augury of the Moghul Emperor then ruling at Delhi. When the attempt had nearly failed, a critic, hostile to the movement and to the Emperor, twitted him with an Urdu couplet, which freely translated would read: "You (the fighters) are exhausted. There is no energy left in you. So, you better now ask the British for clemency to spare your life. The sword of Hindustan has become blunt." To this gibe the proud Emperor, weakened but not humbled, retaliated in a stronger Urdu couplet almost prophetically: "As long as the Gazees (the fighters) are true to their mission, the struggle of Hindustan for freedom will continue and may even reach London."

This prophetic forecast proved to be but too true and the struggle continued in different parts of India, perhaps in spasmodic attempts, to regain freedom from the foreign yoke. One such heroic attempt took place in Maharashtra, initiated by a valiant fighter, an ordinary man fired with the desire to rekindle the dying embers of 1857. During the early days of my life, Maharashtra had been convulsed with his desire for freedom, his daring sacrifice and his patriotic zeal. The ideas rapidly travelled to Bombay. I have briefly related in Chapter I of this Volume how a few of us, of the average ages of 12 years, formed a group and decided to spread his notions of freedom and patriotism. This episode in my early life, though shortened by circumstances, had a profound effect on my entire career as I have described it in the early chapters of this volume.

This agitation for reviving the hopes and aspirations of 1857 was slightly before the Indian National Congress was formed and gave a definite shape, well-regulated and constitutional, to India's desire for freedom. In the early days of the Congress movement, this freedom was sought in Parliamentary Democracy for India, as a Dominion in the British Commonwealth. But, the rising ambitions of the country soon outgrew these earlier limitations and, in course of time, leaders arose in the Congress with more radical notions of freedom, so that, when Tilak and Gandhi came on the scene, the soil had been made ready for a further advance. Tilak crystallized the Indian demand in the simple mantra: "Swaraj is my birthright", and Gandhi gave the movement a moral and spiritual foundation of truth and non-violence, profitably harnessing the country's resentment owing to the Punjab incidents.

Eventually, with the growing need for specialisation and for division of work, *ad-hoc* groups arose in the Congress like, for instance, the Swaraj Party, the Home Rule League and the Khilafat group.

In the march of events so occasioned by the Congress jointly or by the *ad hoc* groups, I had my full share, not only in the political field but also in the off-shoots of the movement in the direction of social, religious and educational reforms. A record of my absorption in these activities forms the subject matter of my narrative and, in the four volumes which I have planned, a complete history of the events of nearly seventy years will be found faithfully based, chapter and verse, on

the unchallenged testimony of authentic facts.

In compiling the story of my narrative I have most carefully eschewed all incidents in which I was not personally concerned. I have also excluded from the narrative all matter of a hearsay character, except when the central incident was founded on authentic historical testimony. It is my hope that my narrative, prepared with such care, will form an adequate addition, if not a timely and appropriate corrective to Congress narratives, enabling the present-day reader to form a correct estimate of the advance of the country during the last seventy years.

My thanks are due to the eminent Congress chroniclers who have expounded the esoteric Congress view regarding public occurrences—constituting helpful material not available from other sources.

In concluding this brief preface, I cannot escape striking a regretful note that, in writing these Memoirs, ample as they are, I have been able, owing to the limitations of ill-health and scanty leisure, to use only a very small fraction of the extensive material which has grown on my hands since I began its collection in the year 1905. The material is both extensive and varied, and, among other sources, it includes diaries kept regularly from year to year since 1905; files of letters—public, private and confidential—with important personages in India and outside; speeches delivered by various men in India and outside; records of Institutions—political, social, religious and domestic; files of press cuttings carefully selected and preserved during all this long period; records of the proceedings of Round Table Conferences, including important papers specially supplied to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and myself owing to the kindness of the British authorities; the proceedings of Indian legislatures—local and central and also of the British Parliament and institutions on matters relating to India.

As stated above, there is a large unused remnant of this material in my possession and I have therefore decided to leave it all in the custody of a public institution of repute, which has resources and willingness carefully to preserve this material and make it available for the use of research scholars of the future, who may desire to compile a complete history of India's struggle for freedom—not only in the region of political polemics but also through all the forms and varieties

x P R E F A C E

of activities, wherein Indian thought struggled to be free from the trammels of ignorance, superstition or suppression. In taking such a hopeful peep into the future, I am comforted by the observation of India's brilliant poet Bhavabhuti. Asked about the fate of his memorable play *Malati Madhavam*, he comforted himself with the hope:

There may be living somewhere at present, or may be born in future years, someone, whose sentiments are in accord with mine—
for Time is boundless and the Earth spacious enough.

M. R. J.

Contents

PREFACE

vii

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY LIFE (1873-1895)

1

Birth and father's death — Mother and grandfather — Their influence — Early training — Career at school and college — Fondness for sports and elocution

CHAPTER TWO

PLAGUE EPIDEMIC TO BEGINNINGS OF LEGAL CAREER (1895-1905)

19

Bubonic plague in Bombay — Effects on social life — Studies at Lonavla — Starting new school — Improved system of education — Yoga philosophy — Marriage — Contact with Ranade — Visit to England for further studies — Oxford — Disappointment — Cured by later degree — British High Courts — Contact with English Bar — Rufus Isaacs (Lord Reading) — Ranji — Shyamji Krishna Varma — Visits to English country residences — Bar examination — Return to Bombay and call to Indian Bar — Hindu system of adoption — Tai Maharaj Case — Intensive literary activity

CHAPTER THREE

EARLY LEGAL CASES TO DEATH OF GRANDFATHER (1905-1915)

61

Professional activity — Typical legal cases — Observations on Bombay Bar — Bombay caucus against Pherozeshah Mehta — Benares Congress, 1905 — Calcutta Congress, 1906 — Surat Congress, 1907 — Split and its consequences — Convention of Liberal Party — Congress Session at Madras, 1908 — Failure of attempt at reconciliation — Intense public activity — Public trials attended — Tilak trial, S. M. Paranjape's trial — D. D. Savarkar — B. B. Bhopatkar — V. D. Savarkar —

xii CONTENTS

Anant Kanhere — Bar opinion about these trials — Intensive activity, social contact with students — Students' Brotherhood — Literary and Scientific Society — Jagannath Shankarseth — Bhau Daji — Their services to Bombay's public life — Pathare Prabhus of Bombay — Baroda Literary Conference — Congress Session in Bombay — Also Muslim League — Their entente — Grandfather's death — His philosophical writings

CHAPTER FOUR

LUCKNOW CONGRESS TO TILAK'S DEATH (1916-1920) 150

Lucknow Congress — Social Conference at Lonavla — Mrs. Besant's internment — Visit to Bangalore to Visvesvaraya — Musical activities and celebrations — War Conference — Swarajists boycott — Montagu's pronouncement and arrival — Calcutta Congress — Congress Special Session in Bombay — Important public meetings — Deputations to England, Tilak League, Besant's League and Congress — Kaira Satyagraha — Horniman's deportation — Sind Students' Conference — Secondary Education and its improvement

CHAPTER FIVE

JALLIANWALA BAUG MASSACRE TO AMRITSAR CONGRESS (1919-1920) 269

Jallianwala Baug incidents — Rowlatt Act — Public opposition — Incidents leading to unrest — Hunter Committee — Congress Committee — Frightfulness in Punjab — O'Dwyer's Regime — Dyer — His admissions before Hunter Committee — Public flogging — Crawling Order — Humiliating incidents — Report of Congress Committee — Its restraint appreciated — Royal proclamation — Amritsar Congress

CHAPTER SIX

AFTER JALLIANWALA BAUGH (1919-1920) 315

Contact with Congress Committee — Work and its nature — Gandhi's eminent role — Report and evidence printed — My full participation — Close contact with Gandhi — Effect of Committee's Report — Correspon-

dence with Gandhi — Misrepresentations by press — Cleared by Jawaharlal — Pen pictures of Das, Motilal Nehru, Gandhi, Malaviya, Tyabji — My Donation to Congress — Gandhi starts non-cooperation — Attacks on education and lawyers — Public baffled — Gandhi overrides opposition — Gandhi's triumph — Bengal and Maharashtra succumb

CHAPTER SEVEN

TILAK'S DEATH TO AHMEDABAD CONGRESS SESSION (1920-1921) 381

Talk with Maharaja Scindia — Tilak's death — His talk about non-cooperation — Calcutta Special Congress Session — Opposition to Gandhi's Resolution — Nagpur Congress — Rapid march — My visit to Gandhi's Ashram at Sabarmati — Suspension of practice and donation — Efforts at national education — Failed — My propaganda on national education continues — Its main features — Karachi speeches of Ali brothers — Gandhi insists on manifesto — Ineffectual — Mulshi Peta agitation — Its failure — Prince of Wales's visit to Bombay — Responsivists' Conference at Shahapur — Later at Akola — Ahmedabad Congress

CHAPTER EIGHT

AFTER AHMEDABAD CONGRESS TO REPORT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE COMMITTEE (DECEMBER 1921- OCTOBER 1922) 504

Viceroy's political offer — Rejected by Gandhi — Condemnation by Das — Controversy — Malaviya Conference in Bombay — Ineffectual — Gandhi's ultimatum to Viceroy — Chauri Chaura incident — Visit to Bardoli — Gandhi scraps Civil Disobedience — Reaction in India and England — Debate in Parliament — Delhi Session of A. I. C. C. — Gandhi's disappointment — His arrest — Trial and conviction — His address to Court — My appreciation — Civil Disobedience Committee — Its purpose and work — Its report — Its effect on political situation

P L A T E S

M. R. Jayakar	<i>Frontispiece</i>
<i>My grandfather: Vasudeva Jagganath Kirtikar</i>	<i>Facing p. 8</i>
<i>My grandmother: Gopikabai</i>	9
<i>My father: Ramrao, and I</i>	9
<i>My mother: Sonabai</i>	40
<i>As a student in London, 1903-1905</i>	41
<i>My wife: Sushilabai</i>	80
<i>My children: Koumudi, Jayapal, Mirabai and Nalini</i>	81
Jagannath Shankarseeth	176
Bhau Daji	176
Gajanan Bhaskar Vaidya	176
Meeting of the Home Rule League held in 1916 at 'Shanti Bhavan', residence of Narottam Morarji Goculdas	177
General Secretaries, The Indian National Congress Special Session, 1918	200
Group photograph on the occasion of the formation of the Swarajya Party at my residence in Girgaum	201

C A R T O O N S

It will require the strength of a giant	p. 171
The pilgrims at the sacred waters of the Godavery	171
The Pathare Prabhus: An Exhortation	172

CHAPTER ONE

Early Life

(Up to 1895)

I was born on 13 November 1873 in Bombay in a middle class family of the Pathare Prabhu community. On the thirteenth day after my birth, which was the occasion, according to family custom, for giving a name to the new-born child, the family astrologer, enjoying high reputation for the accuracy of his predictions, pronounced that the child would do well in life but that his stars would destroy his father within a year of his birth. Whether my stars had really such malign potency, it is difficult to say, but the incident did happen and, within a year of my birth, my father died. He was a junior official in the Bombay Secretariat and, as I learnt later, had a reputation for quick intelligence and also for a quick temper. His death took place under tragic circumstances. His British superior said to him something which offended his self-respect. He retorted in fitting terms, came home, lay in bed and died within three days of hæmorrhage in the brain, which his physicians attributed to the strong resentment caused by the disrespectful behaviour of his British superior. I came to know of this incident much later in life, when, on a certain occasion, I had broken out into a violent rage, my grandfather called me aside and, referring to this incident, gave me a warning against this parental weakness, which warning I always attempted to bear in mind.

After my father's death my upbringing was left entirely in the hands of my mother and my grandfather, Vasudeva Jagannath Kirtikar. He was an eminent lawyer, scholar and philosopher. When, in later life, I visited England and saw something of Mr. Asquith, the eminent lawyer and scholar, I was able to realise how nature could evolve, in different environments, the same type of lawyer-scholar-philosopher.

My grandfather enjoyed a very high reputation for integrity, dignity and courage. Even in his profession, where for many years he was at its head and was Government Pleader in the Bombay High Court, he left a great tradition behind, which to this day is recalled with esteem and respect. Though he had to appear on behalf of the Government in appeals, he would often decline to support what he thought was an unjust conviction of the accused. "There is not enough evidence," he would observe to the judges, "to support the conviction and many pieces of evidence favouring the accused, which counsel for the defence has omitted to point out, prove that the guilt cannot be definitely fastened on the accused." He would add as a justification, if one was needed, that "the Crown is never anxious to obtain an unjust conviction." This fair attitude often drew on him the resentment of the lower executive, anxious to secure convictions especially in a certain type of case, but he proceeded with his courageous course, undaunted by the anger of the executive and sometimes even of the I. C. S. judges.

His sense of rectitude was so high that, on my joining the Bombay Bar in the middle of 1905, while he was Government Pleader, he decided to retire from his office, and in fact did so early in 1907. This was to avoid the possibility that his very eminent position at the Bar might be utilised, either in fact or in public estimation, for promoting my rise at the Bar over whose concerns he presided.

He died on 15 August 1911, four years after his retirement, and the honour done to him on that occasion, by the judicial tribunals and the public of Bombay, will be referred to in greater detail in a later chapter.

At the Bar, he had, in addition to an extensive practice, an admiring circle of friends and, in my early days, I remember meeting some of the legal celebrities of his time. Among them, I can recall a few names, for instance Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik, Shantaram Narayan, Pandurang Balibhadra, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Mahadeo Chimnaji Apte and a few other younger men, most of whom left their impress on the Bombay Bar. His contemporaries amongst British Counsel were also men of high renown, Andrew Scoble, Lang, Jardine, Macpherson and Inverarity, whose names will ever be remembered at the Bombay Bar. In my early life, these legal celebrities frequently visited my grandfather at his residence

and consequently, at a very early age, I obtained the benefit of contact with those who were the makers of the Bombay Bar in those times.

I always thought that it was my great good fortune and I felt perpetually grateful that my early education and upbringing were taken in hand by a person of such renowned integrity, dignity and scholarship, assisted by my mother who was his only daughter and whose only child I was. I knew no father in my life except my grandfather. My mother became a widow at a very young age and was a person of great strictness, rigour and discipline, coupled with deep affection. She brought me up, with constant warnings to keep steadfastly in view the singular fact that the good things which surrounded me in my grandfather's house were only adventitious benefits, which might disappear, without previous warning, as my relations with my grandfather were only on the maternal side and his age did not preclude the possibility of his having a son of his own, either in the ordinary course of nature or by adoption. Consequently my mother perpetually kept me on guard against becoming habituated to the life of ease and comfort which then surrounded me.

On the death of my father my mother received Rs. 3,000 as our share of the patrimony. That was our sole nest egg for the future. My mother frequently drew my attention to it, remarking that I must not lose sight of this hard and inexorable fact in the contagion of my surroundings. So, in the midst of plenty, I had the benefit of being brought up in the strict rigour and economy of the ordinary middle class way of life.

Later in life, I lighted on two noble books written by the late Sane Guruji—*Shyam* and *Shyam's Mother*. I devoured them with avidity, for the picture of a mother which that gifted author had portrayed, struggling through a hard life, guided by deep affection and rectitude, was so powerfully reminiscent of what my mother had done for me, that, on finishing the books, I wrote to the author an affectionate letter, stating that his ideal mother had, in actual life, materialised in mine and that many incidents in his book had found their counterpart in my own life in relation to my mother. Unfortunately, he did not get my letter as he was then in prison and so the matter ended there.

My father's death cast a deep gloom upon the family. It deeply coloured our future. The incident was never permitted

to be mentioned in our family. Any reference to it, however casual, would, it was felt, revive our grief. Photographs of my father sitting singly or with my mother were banned, except that, when I was much older, one photograph was allowed to be hung on the walls which I am reproducing in these memoirs. Deep-seated grief in a family like mine was a singular phenomenon. It would be appreciated only by those who have learnt to consume their sorrow in silent reverence. My mother, grandmother and grandfather hardly ever referred to the incident but, all the time, it lay concealed at the back of their minds, behind their daily worship, their facade of cheerfulness, their holiday attire and decorations. Like a mighty volcano concealing subterranean fires in its fathomless bosom, disclosed occasionally by a tiny streak of blue smoke issuing out of its cavernous depths, the sorrow lay hidden. We were all conscious of its existence, though decorous family behaviour required the maintenance of complete silence about it. On festive days like Divali, when the younger members of the family put on new and bright-coloured clothes, my mother and my grandmother kept to their simple, unadorned apparel. Though apparently full of cheerfulness to suit the occasion and in response to the festive feeling of the younger folk, I often discovered my mother full of suppressed tears, offering, unseen, silent prayers in our prayer room over the solitary photograph of my father which was permitted to be hung in that family Valhalla.

After my father's death, and consequent on it, my grandfather, in great sorrow, left his legal practice for three years and had to be brought back from his grief by the entreaties of kind friends.

I am publishing one of the letters received by my grandfather after my father's death. It is from Shantaram Narayan, one of his friends mentioned above and an eminent leader of the Bombay Bar. It is an old letter of the year 1874-75. It is remarkable for the deep affection which the top lawyers of those times bore for one another, as also for the philosophical sentiments, deep experience of human life and for the scientific knowledge of the heat and energy set free by the splitting up of molecules and atoms, so extraordinarily anticipatory of the much later discovery of the force generated by the splitting of the atom. It is because of this that the letter deserves to be reproduced.

*Saturday*My dear poor Wasu¹

I was horror-struck this morning when I learned from my brother of the misfortune that has overtaken poor little Sonoo [abbreviation for Sonabai, my mother's name] and, through her, yourself. Anyone that has a daughter can feel, in some degree, the immensity of the bereavement which has befallen her and you. I hardly know what more to say or write—to her, it is a living death—worse than death itself. My impulse was to run up to you and mingle my tears with yours. My brother stopped me, saying that it was not reasonable that I should meet you that moment and I felt too that it were better to let you feel the first torments of grief and weep in your heart by yourself—but that moment of the ecstasy of grief is now over and I therefore remind you of your duties to the living. This, you will allow, is the condition of our existence. Family and social ties endear those who are united with us in this journey of life, in which we are all destined for the same end. It is truly a journey measured by so many years, days and moments, for the matter of that, upon which we are, all of us, hastening; one completes his destined pilgrimage sooner than another. In so doing, the ties and bonds by which he was bound to those whom he leaves behind are severed; and this severance and separation causes pain in proportion to the nearness of the ties severed in each instance to those who are left behind. It is even so in the material world, the severance of atoms of molecules previously united, manifests itself in extreme commotion in the adjustment of the particles of matter, causes great heat and shows altogether a great disturbance of the elements of the material world.

It is quite true that the poor child Sonoo has suffered an irreparable loss—your only child widowed for life. What eyes can look upon her meek smiling face, her intelligent eyes, without feeling a pang that she, so young, should be reduced to misery. Yet, so it has been designed by Providence and submission to His decree—a meek resigned submission too—is your plain duty and lot. Nay, your duty to her, as a father, exacts more from you than this. Remember this and act accordingly. It lies on you to curb your own grief to bear up against the war within your own breast—and to convey consolation to her heart—to make her load easy to bear. Let it be your care, as soon as you have mastered your feelings, to give her solace as much as you can possibly give. Do centre your hopes and her hopes upon the little child whom the deceased has left behind. Treat him as a sweet charge to be taken care of by those whom he leaves behind upon this journey of life.

I feel overpowered myself. Dear Wasu, do think upon these things and draw from reflection whatever sweetening flavour you can, in this

¹ Abbreviation of Vasudeva, my grandfather's name.

bitter, most bitter cup of misery which brimful has been put to your lips.

Your affectionate brother,

Shant¹

The next day followed another letter in the same strain.

This family tragedy left a deep impression on my grandfather's mind. Always thoughtful, disciplined and inclined to philosophic resignation, he gradually developed an intensive devotion to the *Adwait* Philosophy of Shankaracharya. The general atmosphere in our home was of devotion, restraint and discipline and owing to this and with the strict control of my mother, I was fortunate in getting, at an early age, all the training which such an environment would produce in a middle-class family. Some of the comforts which surrounded me in my grandfather's home were, in their influence, irresistible but my mother kept me detached from them and I was brought up, from day to day, in all the simplicity of a well-regulated home. My grandfather was not a very rich man as was popularly supposed but was fairly well-to-do and could afford to give me many comforts, even luxuries, if I had wanted them, but my mother rightly stood in the way. I was trained to simple habits. I remember, for instance, doing my reading at night, not at a detached desk or in a comfortable chair, or even in a separate study, but on the staircase which went up to our bedroom. One of the steps, I used as a table. A crude coconut oil lamp, which had to last for three days, I placed on the upper step, the middle one I used as a desk and I sat on the lowest one, compelled to finish my reading before the time arrived for us to go up to our bedroom.

Every evening my mother read to me portions of the Indian classics, *Ramayan*, *Mahabharat*, *Shivalilamrit* and many other devotional books, and she trained my ideals in the manner which these books inculcated for the benefit of the young. These readings were often attended by my classmates, some of whom later rose to high positions in the academic world and elsewhere. My naturally devotional temperament thus received a bias which stood me in good stead during later years, though, at college, I shed some of the excrescences of irrational devotion. I obtained likewise an insight into and

¹ Abbreviation of Shant-r-m

respectful adoration for the Hindu view of life

My grandfather practised at the Bar for 45 years, including, at the early stages (about the year 1862), a period as a Professor of Law at the Government Law School and, later, a period as an advocate at Ahmedabad. As Professor, he had, as pupils, many young men, amongst whom I can recall at this date a few names—Manibhai Jasbhai and Ambalal Sakarlal. Harilal Ambashankar, Chimanlal Setalvad's father, was also in that group, though I am not sure whether he was a pupil of my grandfather. Some of these young men, later, rose to high distinction as *Diwans* and Administrators of the Indian States in Gujerat and owing to their confidence in my grandfather's integrity and ability, most of these States engaged him as legal adviser. This intimate contact with Indian State administration led him to form very definite views about their internal affairs and the advisability of independent men from British India taking service in these States. Here follows a letter dated 23 August 1871, which he addressed to Khanderao Chimanrao Bedarkar, then an official in the High Court of Bombay, giving free expression to his views about State service.

Ahmedabad
23 August 1871

My dear Khanderao,

I have heard that you have accepted some post in the Gaikwad territory. I cannot conscientiously say that I can congratulate you on this event; for I have always entertained an opinion against any educated Indian becoming a servant or holding an office of importance in a Native Principality. However much from abstract and *a priori* theoretically philanthropical principles one may justify acceptance of employment at such a place, I am strongly of opinion that no substantial improvement can be made by an individual self-sacrifice and, unless the State is first prepared to understand and appreciate the advantages of such a useful element as the introduction of intelligence quite above all temptations, it is not, in my opinion, safe for any one individual to become an isolated creator of reforms. He will be more a victim to all sorts of evil influences naturally to be expected in a Native Court, surrounded, as it generally is, by an illiterate and intriguing class of people, rather than become a substantially useful man—however great and honest his exertions for the improvement of the people may be. I am even inclined to think that one in such a position might well fear for the safety of his own life, and, when he would begin

to learn how matters stand, he might even think of the necessity of watching every movement to see that nothing is attempted against his life. This might appear to be an exaggerated account of the character of native rule and it might be considered to be the more so when instances of very eminent talented and well-spirited men having, with vigour and success, managed Native Principalities are considered. These instances are however very few and there were special circumstances which made their individual influence felt. But the general character of native rule in Native Principalities cannot be forgotten. It is with reason said that there is, in such places, generally "a hotbed of intrigue."

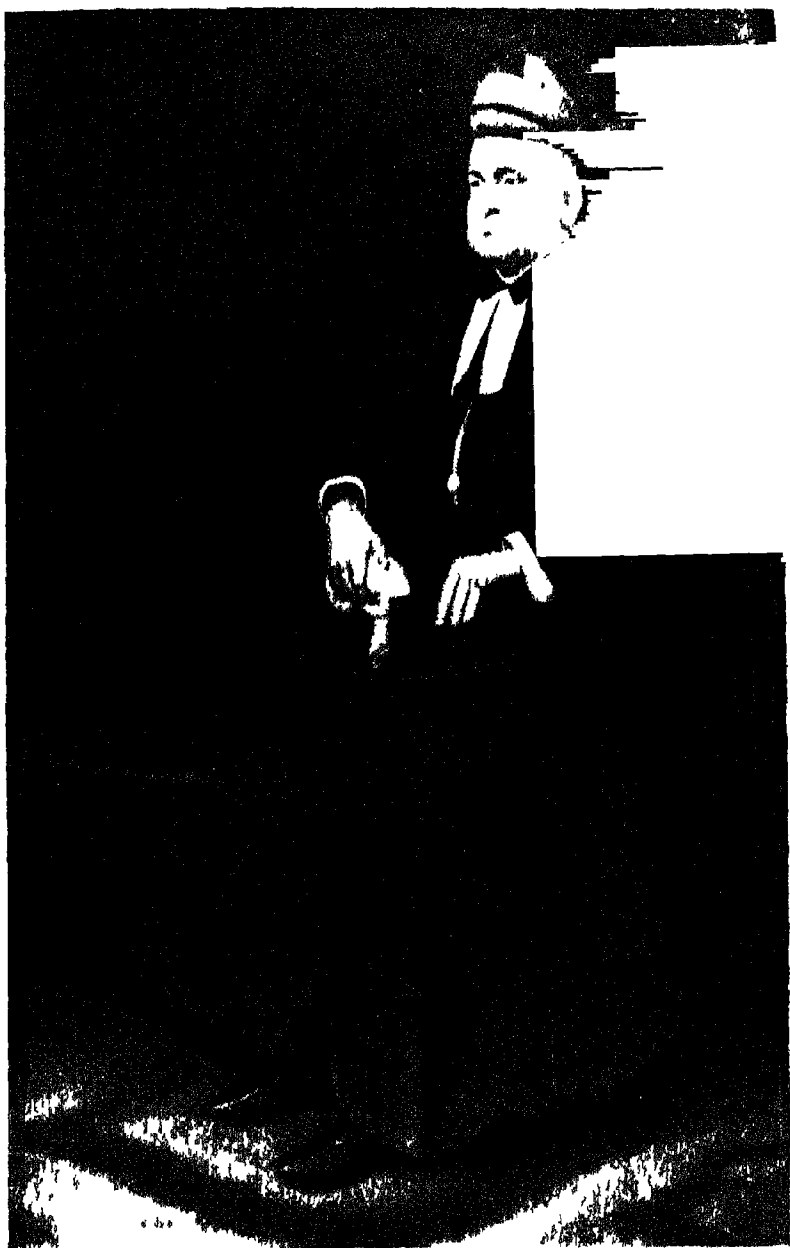
The view contained in this letter represented my grandfather's genuine convictions, acting on which he declined three times the offer of the Prime Ministership of Baroda. One such refusal was in the year 1874 in the days of H. H. Malharrao Gaikwad. I am reproducing here a letter written, shortly after the refusal, by an official in the Baroda service working in the close confidence of the Maharaja. It is addressed to my grandfather.

Baroda,
26-8-1874.

My dear Wasudeo,

You have often declared you would have nothing to do with the administration. This was just the time to step in. But I know you will not. The greater is the pity, otherwise what a splendid field, glorious career and happy prospects. I dare say His Highness would be too glad to have you. It is true you would thereby have to summon all your physical and mental energies and be yoked to work continually. You would miss the frequent writings to which your hand has been accustomed. But worst of all, you will have to forgo many pursuits. I am convinced you will never think of sacrificing all this for the poor satisfaction of becoming a Politician and Statesman, for which your abilities and intelligence so eminently fit you and distinguishing yourself before the world as an administrator. With deep sorrow I say 'Be it so.'

Notwithstanding these views however, when called upon, at a later date (1873-1875), to undertake the defence of Maharaja Malharrao Gaikwad against the false and unmerited charges urged against him by the British Government, my grandfather accepted the brief from a strict sense of professional duty. It is an unwritten rule of the legal profession that a lawyer may not refuse a brief honourably offered, except for



My grandfather VASUDEVA JAGGANATH KIRTIKAR



My grandmother
GOPIKABAI



My father
RAMRAO and I
1871

a valid cause. The history of the Maharaja's trial, including the final decision of the British Government that the charge of his complicity in poisoning the Resident was not proved to be true, but, despite it, the later deposition of the Maharaja, on the ostensible plea of his general maladministration, are matters too well-known to be detailed here.

I may however record the following event relating to this episode. I once asked my grandfather to mention a conspicuous incident in his long career of which he always felt proud, so that his family might cherish its memory as a priceless heritage. He replied as follows:

"I was the chief legal adviser of His Highness. In the concluding days of his rule, he turned to me more and more for advice and consolation. I was with him one afternoon, when news was brought that British soldiers and officials had arrived, at the Baroda palace, to arrest him prior to his deposition. The Maharaja had then on his person a beautiful necklace of many strings of large white and black pearls, famous, at the time, at the Court of Baroda. Addressing me the Maharaja said, 'You have served me well and faithfully through times of stress and difficulty. I have not been able to reward your friendship and help, but now that I am going away, will you kindly permit me to offer this necklace to you as a token of my esteem and gratitude.'"

My grandfather continued his comments:

"I felt for a moment giddy at the thought of coming into sudden possession of such a colossal fortune, but I soon regained my balance and most thankfully declined the gift. When the Maharaja pressed me again, adding that, in any event, the priceless necklace would probably be forfeited on his arrest, I added, 'The lawyer's Code of honour, Your Highness, is very strict; he may charge and receive very high professional fees, but anything beyond, in the nature of a private gift, is, to the lawyer, contraband.'"

I will add that when, later in life, working in London as a pupil in the Chamber of an eminent British Counsel, who afterwards became my colleague on the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council, the Right Hon'ble Lord Romer, I had many ocular proofs of the exalted traditions of the English Bar and I could then fully realise the nobility of the ideal which regulated my grandfather's behaviour on that occasion.

My mother placed in my hand, at an early age, short life-sketches of the historic personages of Maharashtra. Among these heroes, Shivaji the Great necessarily occupied the foremost place. My mother invested his life's story with a personal touch, constantly referring to the guiding influence of his mother Jijabai as the mainspring of Shivaji's greatness. his exalted patriotism, undaunted courage, spotless virtue and liberal conceptions of freedom and independence. About this time, Maharashtra was convulsed with the efforts of a few patriotic spirits to rid their country of the incubus of alien rule. Notably among them, the attempt of Vasudeo Balwant Phadke, who came from a village only a few miles distant from Bombay, attracted our special admiration. At this time, I belonged to a group which had inherited purely Bombay traditions and Bombay, at this time, owing to historic antecedents, had not learnt to recognise itself as an inseparable part of the land of Maharashtra, a phase politically later in development. Notwithstanding this however, we were greatly moved by the freedom movements in the Deccan.

Stirred by them, a few of us secretly formed ourselves into a well-knit group, whose undisclosed purpose was to imitate the early activities of Shivaji and to spread, amongst our fellows, his message of freedom. We were at this time of the average age of 8 to 10 years but even at this early age we read newspapers and devoured political news with avidity, desiring to model our activities on what we conceived, in our young minds, to be the ideals of Maharashtra's great movement for freedom, the distant echoes of which often fell on our ears in Bombay.

The first thought was to obtain weapons for our little "army". The only weapons easily available were bows and arrows. The gradual preparation of the "army" was a closely guarded secret. A few pliant bamboos served as skeletons of the bows and, with rope-twines soaked in melted wax, a fairly good weapon came to our hands. The difficulty of obtaining arrows was met by cheaply purchasing the metal ribs of dilapidated umbrellas, which we ground into fine points on the domestic stone, on which my mother daily prepared sandalwood paste for my grandfather's use. The stone lay in our prayer room and was easily available during spare time. My cousin, who was very athletic, and knew Indian *ju-jitsu* and similar devices, was our leader. Under his guidance, we

often met to concert our plans which had reached some maturity. But our group later disintegrated, when we reached the High School stage and many members left Bombay for purposes of education.

This short-lived attempt, however, had a great effect on my mind. It guided my views and activities in later life. Maharashtra is a great country, the land of heroes, its leaders are selfless, venerable, courageous men, to be always mentioned with pride and reverence; they made, after the freedom effort of 1857, the first manifest attempt to throw off the hurtful yoke of the foreigner, their desire of freedom was wide and liberal, namely to set free the ordinary man—these sentiments, then awakened in youthful simplicity, always remained active in later life, perhaps sharpened by the injustice done to Maharashtra from time to time in the public affairs of the country, which injustice, I may truthfully observe, continues up to the present day. These sentiments formed in later life the fulcrum of many activities, the only difference being that my conception of Maharashtra was gradually enlarged to encompass the whole of India. In fact, these sentiments led me later to take active part in movements like the Home Rule League and, for a time, the Non-cooperation Movement and the Indian National Congress and impelled me later to bring about, on more than one occasion, an *entente* between the Congress and the British Government. Love of one's country and reverence for its great men, stirred up in young minds, have always proved the most valuable preparation for the attainment of freedom, as the history of the world testifies.

Except for this episode and another tragic incident mentioned below, my career at school was most uneventful. The tragic incident occurred as follows:

My grandfather was then building a new house near our family residence. It rose to five floors and for a time lay unfinished and the stairs at the several floors, arranged on the top of one another were fastened in position with strong ropes but not screwed on permanently. One morning, in the arms of a muscular servant, I was taken to the top floor to see the view around. We went up safe but, while coming down, the top stairs gave way and, with their collapse, the stairs underneath, one after another, crashed to the ground, and in a minute we were hurled down to the bottom. But

the loyal servant held me tightly clasped to his bosom, even as he lay prostrate and injured on the ground floor, thereby protecting me from harm. My survival from this accident and especially my mother's comments on its significance deeply impressed me and I ever remembered her admonition that my life had been spared by Providence at such an early age for rendering useful service to others in later life.

At school, I was nothing better than an ordinary student. I occupied a middle place in my class and this insignificance pursued me through the Marathi course of five years; when, however, I reached the middle school III standard, a sermon from my mother electrified me and from that day onwards a change came, and I applied my mind with vigour to my studies. Thereafter, right up to the Matriculation, I occupied a very high place in my class, often rising to the top and receiving prizes and a monthly scholarship of Rs. 4. In those days, such scholarships were awarded to boys drawn from the middle classes but subsequently they were exclusively reserved for members of the scheduled and backward classes.

During my career at Elphinstone High School, which was in those days regarded as the best public school in Bombay for middle class boys, I remember one incident which is worth recording, as indicative of the conservative notions which then prevailed even in Government schools. The incident is also useful as marking the progress we have since made in our social ideas. Elphinstone High School was then under the Principalship of a very austere educationist and social reformer, Waman Abaji Modak. The school had two Divisions, Marathi and Gujerati, which included Parsees. Principal Modak, apart from his high educational qualifications, did the singular duty of keeping in check not only Maratha boys but also Parsee students, who had then the reputation of being unruly in the hands of non-Parsee teachers.

Under the system then prevailing, I had to offer a second or optional language on entering the High School, in addition to English and my own mother-tongue Marathi. In those days, only two optional languages could be offered, namely Sanskrit and Persian. French had not come into vogue; with the result that most non-Brahman boys offered Persian, their plausible justification for the preference being the evil and unjustified reputation that Sanskrit had acquired as a difficult subject of study, rendered more so by hard examination-tests con-

ducted by relentless examiners. As my grandfather was a devoted Sanskritist, he insisted on my offering Sanskrit. The teacher in charge of Sanskrit studies in my class was a conservative Brahman. He was shocked at the unusual exception I formed to the general run of non-Brahman students and my insistence on offering Sanskrit, in spite of his declared wishes and pressure, made him very angry. After all his attempts to persuade me to give up Sanskrit had failed, he ordered me to leave the classroom as punishment and stand for ten days on a bench outside the classroom in the public corridor. I enjoyed the sympathy of my classmates but it availed me little. An appeal might lie to the Principal, but he was far too above us, unapproachable in his high and austere dignity.

So I bore this punishment for over a week, enjoying the "outing" with amusement. I brought sweets from home and purchased a few from the school vendor. When, after school hours, the class was dismissed, I walked home with a heroic feeling of martyrdom in the company of my admiring classmates. On the ninth day of the suffering, Principal Modak came to inspect the class during his periodical rounds and, finding me in an isolated position, went into the classroom to enquire. The teacher ventured to give no reply but my helpful classmates revealed the truth. From the next day, the Principal asked me to join the class.

I recall this incident in some detail because its impression on my mind determined my attitude in later years, of friendly co-operation and support of all causes, public and private, intended for the uplift of castes or individuals suffering from the social or religious tyranny of the higher castes.

The system of education then current in High Schools in Bombay was that the entire course was spread over four classes occupying four years from the IVth to the VIIth standard. Each class had a junior and senior division; and every six months success in an internal examination led to promotion to the next higher class, until the top was reached in what was called the "candidate class" consisting of students preparing to take the Matriculation examination which was the entrance examination to the University of Bombay. It was a curious accident that going through these classes during ensuing years, I never met again the conservative teacher mentioned above except when I reached the apex, namely

the Matriculation class. In the last examination test of the school I occupied the top place and won two prizes—one for proficiency in Sanskrit and one for proficiency in English. The nephew of the teacher mentioned above was my friend and competitor and when I won the prizes in both the subjects, the teacher concerned, anxious to secure at least one of them for his nephew standing next to me in rank, had to undergo the humiliation of requesting me to waive my right to one of the two prizes, so that his nephew might obtain it. When so requested, I gave up the English prize and retained the Sanskrit one, as a recompense for the humiliation the teacher had caused me in early days.

The teaching in the High School in those days was of a conservative type. In a Government High School, a class rarely contained more than 25 to 30 students. Different teachers taught different subjects, although there was a "class teacher" to whom the general supervision of the class was entrusted, including the duty of calling the morning roll. The whole course of studies was full of dead routine, most teachers had lost their freshness, teaching the same or similar subjects from term to term. A few teachers were exceptions, especially those who came fresh after graduation.

One thing which I developed in my High School days was a passion for cricket and elocution. My fondness for cricket grew from my school days. The High School had a large playground and, during the mid-day recess and after the termination of the class in the afternoon, we had day to day practice in cricket which led to my increasing fondness for sports. Opposite the High School was a large *maidan* where we had matches from time to time and the peak event in cricket was reached when, once a year, a match was played between the local European Gymkhana and a representative Indian team, consisting of young players selected from different cricket clubs by a pioneer organization called the Hindu Cricket Club. In later times, this match was superseded by what came to be known as Quadrangular and Pentangular matches. In my time, there was hardly any communal feeling connected with these events but it later developed with the bigger matches.

To acquire the art of public speaking I joined an excellent organization in Bombay called the Pathare Prabhu Social Samaj. In the work carried on there, were reflected some of

the best social features of the Pathare Prabhu community, as I knew it in my time. Whether the claim of that community to be descended from a royal personage, Raja Bimb, the first ruling chief of that community in the 12th century, is historically sound or not, though no less a scholar than the late Dr. A. M. T. Jackson¹ supports the claim, the fact was that, that community being the first to come into contact with the British and, before them, the Portuguese, held in their time positions of great honour and responsibility in Bombay, in official and non-official life.

The Prabhus were among the earliest settlers in Bombay in pre-British days and were the first to introduce the blessings of civilization into the desert island and to transform it from a fishing island into a flourishing town, adorned with temples and palaces, with gardens and orchards and surrounded by smiling fields and waving palms. The Prabhus watched over the growth of the island, fostered its trade, presided over the course of its public affairs and thus formed the *noblesse* of commerce and politics in the new kingdom.²

The more recent history of the community is one of very chequered fortune. They had to beat the sword into a ploughshare, accepting smaller offices under the Maratha Confederacy of the great patriot Shivaji, whose seat was at Satara, and of the Peshwas, as the neighbouring rulers of Poona were called. The Prabhus left Bombay when the Portuguese appeared, being unwilling to change their religion. The British occupation was the signal for a return of the Prabhus to their beloved island, where they flourished and almost monopolized the best offices under the East India Company. If the sword had brought them glory, the pen now gave them wealth, and it is said that, in the 18th century, they were among the richest folk in Bombay. Today, though this golden age has also disappeared into the limbo of the unforgotten past, the latest phase is one of not less interesting if different achievements, though the chink of gold mohurs no longer sounds in Prabhu houses.

In my time the Prabhus had lost much of their former glory. But even in their comparative decadence, they were

¹ See *Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island*, Vol. II, p. 15.

² See *The Rise of Bombay* by S. M. Edwards, I.C.S., pp. 21, 22 and 273

known for their urbanity, generosity, sportsmanship, hospitality and many other social and domestic virtues, so conspicuously absent in their then surroundings. One of the arts which they loved to foster was public speaking and their younger members maintained efficiently the institution called the Pathare Prabhu Social Samaj which I have already mentioned and which retains its utility to this day.

As I have said, as a student I joined the Samaj and had my early training there in the art of public speaking. We met on Saturday afternoons and had papers read and speeches delivered, alternately in English and Marathi. My favourite occupation was making speeches, delivered, as far as possible, without the aid of written notes, though not without very careful previous preparation. I had, even then, a horror of manuscript oratory and this aversion clung to me all through my later activities.

After I passed the Matriculation examination, I joined St. Xavier's College which was conducted by the Society of Jesus. There were then two other colleges in Bombay, Elphinstone College, a Government institution with a superior staff of teachers, and Wilson College, maintained by a Scottish missionary society. I came upon good teachers at St. Xavier's College and what I learned there stood me in good stead at the examinations, but the one defect of the instruction imparted at that college was that students were choked full with predigested food. The professor dictated, in the class rooms, well-prepared notes but very little contact face to face ever took place. We were mere automatons, engaged in taking down dictated notes, which were not always either audible or intelligible. Opportunities of meeting the professor, exchanging ideas with him, were limited. Classes were large, the First Year Class, for instance, had more than 300 students crowded in a large dark room, where shy or shortsighted students had to take a back seat and remain content with copying what was written on the distant blackboard or taken down by their clearsighted neighbour. The back of the professor engaged with the blackboard was more frequently visible than his face. But we accepted all this disagreeable drugging. There was no alternative and, besides, there was always the possibility of the college teacher being an examiner at the University examination. His notes consequently acquired sacrosanct importance. The main attraction of this

college was that it worked from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and I was free to go home early in the afternoon and carry on my private studies and pursuits, ending generally with cricket practice in the evening.

Life ran very smoothly. One examination came after another: I took them very lightly, profiting by the sagacious advice of a teacher who warned me not to waste energy in passing examinations high but to reserve it for better purposes in later life.

After graduation in 1895 at St. Xavier's College, as there was no provision there for higher Sanskrit studies which I had offered as one of my optionals, I joined Elphinstone College which had grown out of the closure of an older body called Elphinstone Institution. That Institution had served the State for many years in rearing up what were then known as "normal scholars", of whom my grandfather was one. This was during pre-university days and after the University of Bombay was founded, some of these "normal scholars" refused to submit to the test imposed by the new University, claiming its highest degree as a just recognition of their merits.

Teaching methods at Elphinstone College were materially different from those of St. Xavier's College. The contrast between them was strongly borne in upon me, when, in later years, I had experience of a British University. Elphinstone College had different notions of preparing students for the several examinations. There was less spoon-feeding, more leisure and freedom to carry on our studies, more contact with the professors, and more opportunities of exchange of thought. One of my professors, Dr. Peterson, left a great reputation behind both for his erudition and kindness of heart. Government acted with commendable foresight in those days, when they maintained at this college a few *Shastris* (Pandits) learned in the conservative methods of ancient scholarship. Their duty was to guide, and not so much to coach, the students in the several branches of higher Sanskrit. One professor (Rajaram Shastri Bodas) taught Vedic literature, another (Zalkikar) *Nyaya* (Logic) and a third Sanskrit Humanities. We had to go up to their rooms and learn practically "at their feet". I benefited immensely by contact with these learned men whose knowledge was encyclopædic. Their memory was prodigious, being the traditional gift so much prized in ancient India. We went to their rooms when

their help was needed. They met the students at long intervals, giving them directions to guide their studies for several weeks ahead. During this long interval the students studied practically unaided. A scholar, it is said, is the creation of leisurely studies. That is the ancient conception of a scholar both in India and Europe. Teachers taught and pupils learned without the stress and hurry of competitive tests. A Sanskrit definition of a true scholar, translated freely, would be one "who hives wisdom every studious year".

I spent a delightful two years at Elphinstone College, offering English and Sanskrit as my optionals. During leisure intervals, I picked up a lot of the flotsam and jetsam of literature, English and Sanskrit, and eventually obtained in 1897 the Master's Degree mainly on the strength of an essay I wrote, dealing with the teachings of Goethe and Carlyle. Among other benefits, these studies furnished perpetual inspiration in my later quest after intellectual freedom.

CHAPTER TWO

Plague Epidemic to Beginnings of Legal Career

(1895 to 1905)

IN THE autumn of the year 1895, Bombay City was visited by what was called bubonic plague. It was an unexpected visitation. Bombay had no previous experience of it. Owing to this total unfamiliarity, the fright it occasioned was unprecedented. Where this deadly visitation came from we never knew, though a story was current, half mysterious and half apocryphal, that the infection found its way into Bombay through a cargo ship from China, which brought infected rats into the harbour. Whether this was so or not, it is difficult to say. The fact, however, was that the infection started in the Bombay port area and soon spread over other parts of the city. The rapidity of the infection, coupled with its strangeness, spread great panic through the residential areas. I was then reading for the M. A. degree and had, therefore, to remain in Bombay. Most of my family were, however, compelled, against their wishes, to leave Bombay and reside at our country seat at Lonavla at the top of the Sahyadri Hills.

Nearly every middle-class community, with resources enough, started its own hospitals to deal with the rapidly increasing plague cases. My grandfather helped to found one such hospital with his initial donation of Rs. 5,000 and the medical men of the community supplied voluntary aid and carried on the effort successfully beyond the first year of the plague, thus saving the lives of many men and women who could not afford the expenses of evacuation or costly treatment. The hospital was very well-conducted and secured the encomiums of the Government department dealing with the

visitation. The Government took preventive steps, many of which, however well-meant, caused unnecessary irritation and annoyance. Difficulties arose for persons desiring to leave Bombay for their village homes, caused by the planting of inspection and quarantine centres at several stations on the railways, which formed the exit from Bombay into the open country beyond. This caused needless irritation and prevented many families from evacuating affected areas. An *ad hoc* Committee was appointed by Government and placed in power, more or less absolute, under the sole direction of a military man and the civil Government of Bombay practically abdicated all powers to this committee in all matters connected with the plague administration. Residential quarters were searched for infective cases and, in many places, this search was left in the hands of the military, mostly unfamiliar with the ways and habits of the Indian population. The rigour of their work was often more than the people could understand or appreciate. In some places in the Deccan, for instance, where the citizens were less appreciative of the official zeal than in capital towns like Bombay, violent crime broke out with the desire of spirited youths to avenge wrongs inflicted, in some cases unwittingly, on the residents in the enforcement of evacuation orders.

Thus the City of Bombay and in fact the whole of the Presidency was thrown into panic and confusion in the first year of the visitation, though, later, as the people and the Government both grew more familiar with the nature of the disease and the remedy of inoculation became more popular, the rigour of the initial measures was relaxed.

One incidental advantage of this visitation was that families which had never resided outside the congested parts of Bombay were compelled by circumstances to shift their residences to hutments on the Back Bay area facing the sea or to upcountry places along the two railway lines which provided convenient transport. These opportunities of open air life were, in course of time, greedily availed of by the general public, as their benefits were increasingly appreciated. Residences grew, at first temporary, in the suburbs of Bombay, which, in course of time, led to the formation of colonies where middle class communities established themselves in healthy and cheap surroundings.

After the examination season was over in November 1895,

I left Bombay to join my family in our country seat at Lonavla. I stayed there in healthy and rustic surroundings for eight months and this quiet and restful period enabled me to carry on my studies beyond what had been necessary for the M. A. examination. In later years, I always recalled this period as perhaps the happiest in my life. The anxiety caused by the anticipation of dreaded examinations had ended and, with it, the necessity of perfunctory reading just sufficient to satisfy the supposed whims of the expected examiners. With most students, preparation for examinations is more or less a hand-to-mouth affair—an evil heightened, in later life, by the supply of “cribs” to needy students. All this hasty and *ad hoc* preparation had happily ended and I could take in hand deeper and prolonged reading in my private studies. I was then unmarried and my mother looked after our comforts, leaving me free to divide my time between my favourite pursuits—music and reading. The life I then led is reflected in a letter, selected out of a few which I then wrote to my grandfather, describing the life I led there and how I relieved the monotony of an extended stay in a rustic village.

11-12-1896

Lonavla

My dear Grandfather,

I am often weary of the monotonous life we have to lead here, although, in my case, the monotony is greatly relieved by an occasional letter to friends or some snatches at a book, or by solitary cool rides on my cycle. I am at present going over Martineau's *Study of Religion* and this heavy and laborious study I relieve at intervals by some hours of lighter reading, e.g. *The Story of Ancient Nations*. The best part of the day I find in the cool evenings, when, riding on my bicycle, I leave behind all sophisticated nature—this quiet village is now invaded by rubber-tired vehicles and other fancies and I penetrate deep into sequestered spots, away from the hum of busy life, meeting sometimes a belated labourer or a weary traveller struggling on his pony to the nearest village. Above me lie, as Carlyle would say, the silent immensities, “Stars silent above me, graves silent below me.” Around me, lie the newly cultivated fields, with the young sprouts just peeping above the furrowed glebe, with the twinkling Venus in the heavens shedding dim lustre on the western horizon, though partly eclipsed by the languid rays of the setting sun and the silvery light of the buoyant moon growing brighter every moment with the sun's departure. The hum of a distant village, the barking of a vigilant dog or the

whistle of a hurrying train falls at intervals upon my ear, thus relieving the unvaried calmness of the scene. The distant hill forts, famous in Maratha history, rear their tall and majestic heads, touched with the last rays of the departing sun and they nod, as it were ominously, on the dusky horizon. Surrounded by such scenes I sweetly commune with nature, fancying every fort to be still the seat of the mighty Maratha and I recognize in every passerby a member of that unorganized yet powerful class, whom Shivaji shaped into a mighty force.

About this time, some of my college friends who had, like me, finished their course of studies, conceived the idea of starting a public school in Bombay to impart education free from the defects we had observed in it during our careers. These defects were chiefly due to the fact that the educational edifice had been reared by the British Government mainly with a view to training a race of educated Indians, who would help British administration to be carried on with ease, or in Macaulay's exalted phraseology, who would be "interpreters" between the Rulers and Ruled. Macaulay's conception, whatever its grandeur or nobility in his own mind, resolved itself, in practical working, into an educational machine, turning out, year after year, young men devoid of the haughty spirit, stern independence, deep thought and burning patriotism, which, we had realized, was the educational aim and ideal of a free country like England and which, we thought, ought to be also the aim and ideal of our educational effort. The generality of the students, as we knew them from year to year, were wanting in these attributes, and were, on the contrary, cringing, devoid of self-respect, ignorant of their cultural heritage and indifferent to the humiliating inferiority which faced them on all sides.

As we studied our environments, these features impressed us more and more and when we approached the higher courses of study in politics, economics and the general administration of the British Government, of which the educational system was only a reflection, we came to realise, more and more, that the whole system was conceived in a spirit which could be faithfully described, without undue injustice to British rule, in the following words:

Under the British system Indians were to be—

"not colleagues but subordinates; not, in their own land, rulers and chiefs, with reasonable ambition satisfied and the scope for natural and

national energies provided—not these things for Indians. For them, of every caste and creed, the doom was fixed; they at home, among their fellows, were to become ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’, with such employment in Government service as would not be worth the acceptance of any Englishman however poor. The decision was fateful, alike for India and for England. It was consciously taken. It has been accepted by the underdog in the struggle; it has only been varied infinitesimally by the dog on top, accordingly as to whether he found himself in a good humour or not”.¹

These terse comments of Mr. Digby were occasioned by an official document written by a Madras Civilian, Mr. William Thackeray, who was a member of the Board of Revenue and an official favourite, when Lord William Bentinck was Governor of Madras (1903-1907). In discussing the agrarian policy of the Government, this official favoured the general distribution of land among a number of small proprietors, who could not easily combine against the Government and he opposed the concentration of territorial power and influence in the hands of independent minded Indians. In this connection Mr. Thackeray opined as follows:

It is very proper that in England, a good share of the produce of the earth should be appropriated to support certain families in affluence, to produce senators, sages and heroes, for the service and defence of the State, or, in other words, that a great part of the rent should go to an affluent nobility and gentry, who are to serve their country in the Parliament, in the Army and Navy, in the Departments of science and liberal professions. The leisure, independence and high ideas, which the enjoyment of this rent affords, has enabled them to raise the British to the pinnacle of glory. Long may they enjoy it—but in India *that haughty spirit, independence and deep thought which the possession of great wealth sometimes gives, ought to be suppressed. They are directly adverse to our power and interest.* The nature of things, the past experience of all Governments, renders it unnecessary to enlarge on this subject. *We do not want Generals, Statesmen and Legislators: We want industrious husbandmen.* If we wanted rank, restless and ambitious spirits, there are enough of them in Malabar to supply the whole peninsula: but these people are at least an encumbrance if nothing more; they can never do good and at all events, consume a good deal without rendering any equivalent service to the public. *We must, therefore, avoid the creating of more; though we submit to the necessity of supporting those who now are.* [The italics are mine.]

¹ *Prosperous British India* by William Digby c. r. e., T. Fisher Unwin (1901), p. 38.

Commenting on these sentiments, Mr. Digby observes as follows:

Never perhaps, has the arrogance and cruelty of alien rulers towards their subjects been more nakedly and cynically announced. That which was essential for English greatness in its homeland and for every other people in their respective homelands, was to be withheld, deliberately withheld, from the Indian people in their own country. Without circumlocution and with a cynicism which belies the profession expressed at the same time that the happiness of the people was the sole object of the new conquerors, the subjection of many scores of millions of people for at least a century and may be for ever was unconcernedly set forth in clear terms.

It took us some time to realise the inner significance of the British system as described above, although its rigour was softened, in a few cases, by a better type of Englishmen we sometimes came across. In those days, there were very few schools in Bombay conducted by private Indian agencies. There were mostly Government schools or Missionary institutions, in a few of which, by the very nature of their constitution, qualities prized in England, as stated above, would be sedulously inculcated, developed or encouraged. An individual institution or a teacher might endeavour to do so, as some in fact did, but they were exceptional cases.

Consequently, the idea of having a school of our own conception gradually arose in our minds and was given expression to by one of us. Vinayak Harishchandra Thakur, who rose later to be a high official in the Revenue Department of the Bombay Government, circulated, on 7 March 1897, a letter setting out the essentials of the scheme we had conceived and he presented them for the consideration of our group as follows:

We should have educational establishments carried on by ourselves at the principal and cardinal centres of Maharashtra. They must be at a reasonable distance from the towns and on pleasant and beautiful sites. While the boys are there, in the early part of their stay, the rules of health and hygiene should be clearly impressed on them. Their time of study, play, attendance in the class-rooms, their dinner, sleep and physical exercise should be reasonably and excellently regulated. That the life might not appear monotonous to them, religious education and observances should be maintained, and all feasts and festivals celebrated to the delight of the young. Their tendencies of

sport, so beneficial and natural to youth, should be indulged and free companionship encouraged among the boys and affectionate paternal relations established between the teachers and their pupils.

As the boys advance, their love of knowledge and learning should be tenderly fostered, and their habits of study and self-restraint, their sense of honour and duty developed. Their courses of study should be regulated in the most liberal and tolerant spirit impressing upon them that knowledge, wherever found, is valuable. The student should not scruple to learn from the Greeks and Romans, from the Arabs and the Europeans, as from his own native language or Sanskrit. In the higher classes, the students should be taught the rudiments of military service and military drill and riding and shooting enforced. The boarding and lodging of the students should be comfortable and tasteful, without being luxurious. A vast library, a well equipped gymnasium, a resident physician, a good playground should be provided. The teachers should have a reverential hold on the minds of the students, they should not be simply teachers but learned, spirited and patriotic men, lovers of knowledge, proud of their country and devoted to God and their religion.

During our college days and just immediately before the starting of the school, there was quite a campaign of religious activity based upon the teachings of Ramkrishna Paramhansa and Vivekanand, supplemented by popular lectures by Dr. Besant and by kirtans and sermons based upon the teachings of the saints of Maharashtra. It produced a great awakening amongst the younger generation, mainly on the need for a comprehensive and expansive view of the Hindu religion. While at college, most of my colleagues had studied Hindu philosophy and had obtained an insight into its teachings and their value as the basis of popular religious instruction. As mentioned above, such instruction was to be the main pivot in the scheme of our new school. We further discovered that the essence of such teaching would lie in the adoption of the *Bhagvat Gita* as our textbook of religious instruction. We felt that its teachings, though based upon the noblest principles of the Hindu faith, almost universal in their application, could be adopted, not only as a system of philosophy but as a gospel of everyday behaviour, regulating all the duties, from sunrise to sunset, of the students joining the high school. We were strongly impressed with the practical nature of the teachings of the *Bhagvat Gita* and in our early deliberations, by common consent, we accepted that book as the basis of our religious instruction.

None of us at that time was older than 20 or 21 years and we all wore caps. Consequently, the spectacle of youths like us teaching the noble and recondite principles of the *Bhagvat Gita* evoked criticism, especially in quarters like the Christian missionary societies, which looked with jealousy and suspicion upon our effort. This suspicion eventually developed into an objection raised by the Government Department of Public Instruction, that, in the guise of the religious teachings of the *Gita*, we were spreading seditious views affecting the popularity of the British government. This objection, for a long time lurking underground, was brought to our notice by a frontal attack on the teachings in our school, in its relation to the University of Bombay, whose recognition was necessary for the continuance and further progress of our institution. Fortunately, however, we then had a few eminent supporters in the Syndicate of the Bombay University and they succeeded, not without difficulty, in proving that this accusation was unfounded. Owing to the general religious ferment, to which reference has already been made, and the general distrust of the Education Department of the Government, which had some powerful representatives in the University of Bombay, colour was lent to this suspicion and, but for the assistance of eminent friends, we should probably have had, at the very threshold, to abandon religious instructions or to close the school. But, with the growth of the popularity of the school and its work during the first few years, we succeeded in our attempt to remove the deep-seated suspicion of the Government and the University.

The friends named below, who participated in our effort, became in later life officials of the Government in the administrative, educational and legal spheres. They were V. H. Thakur, S. R. Dharadhar, V. R. Joshi, P. B. Shingne, S. S. Trilokekar, A. P. Kothare, R. S. Navalkar, and two part-time helpers, R. N. Kothare and S. B. Nayak. My colleagues very kindly proposed that I should accept the post of Principal, but, unfortunately, as I was detained at Lonavla and the increasing virulence of the plague made it difficult for me to visit Bombay, I was not able immediately to accept that responsible office, the duties of which involved constant presence in Bombay. My place was thereupon taken by my old friend and colleague from the Fourth Standard Marathi up to the M.A., S. R. Dharadhar, who was appointed the first Principal.

When the rigour of the plague abated, we met in Bombay, nine of us, and decided to call our Society, *Maratha Education Society*. The name was later changed to *Aryan Education Society* which the society still bears. In the first Prospectus which was issued in the month of May, 1897, we announced to the public the ideals of the new school, its method of work, special features, scale of fees, facilities and concessions to poor students, scholarships for deserving scholars, constitution of the classes, free-studentships, influence and effect of religious instruction, adoption of Marathi as the medium of instruction, special qualifications of the teachers and such other matters.

It was to be a High School from the Fourth to the Seventh standard and the initial difficulties of obtaining funds for preparing the furniture etc. of the classes was relieved by my grandfather giving a handsome donation and my cousin (Dr.) S. B. Nayak undertaking the supervision of the preparation of such furniture.

On 1 June 1897, we started registering students, and the popularity of our effort was so great that, on the very first day, 250 students registered their names and, in a fortnight, the figure rose to 500. We had consequently to supplement the accommodation we had initially obtained and to make provision for about 700 students, who were enrolled in a few days' time.

The later history of the school is one of continuous success from one stage to another, which, in the beginning, was made possible by our self-sacrificing resolve to accept no salaries but to bring together individually donations of Rs. 100 each to tide over our initial financial difficulties. Later, as our work advanced, we secured several good workers; some of them rose to distinction in later life, like G. K. Deodhar, the prominent disciple of Gokhale. We soon found our feet and obtained valuable guides as trustees and members of Council, my grandfather; the late Justice Ranade; Dr. Bhalchandra, well-known physician of Bombay; and Sir Vijbhukandas Atmaram, a merchant-prince, father of Sir Chunilal V. Mehta. We obtained free legal advice from my grandfather and Nanu N. Kothare of the then eminent firm of Solicitors, Nanu and Hormusjee. With their help, we prepared rules and regulations to guide our work.

Gradually new men came in. The number of students

increased and we adhered to our resolve to avoid the acceptance of Government grants, which, under the conditions then prevalent, involved an obligation to regulate the affairs of our school, including our courses of study, according to the narrow and illiberal notions of the authorities of those times. It was only in the year 1938, when an Indian Government came into power, and the old sting connected with the receipt of government grants had been replaced by a liberal attitude, that we accepted grants from Government.

While a teacher at the A. E. High School, ample opportunities arose for private studies and I could continue them beyond the stage reached during the restful period, November 1895 to June 1896. Life at the school was full of selfless effort. Very few of us accepted any salaries for our work at School. The initial expenses had to be provided for, beyond the donation given by my grandfather. As a partial provision for these costs, we brought into the hotch-pot, as stated above, an individual donation of Rs. 100 each. The teaching work did not occupy all my time and beyond attendance at the meetings of the Committee and preparing at home for the teaching—English and Sanskrit—which subjects were allotted to me for the higher classes—all my time was at my disposal and I could therefore study more deeply the intricacies of Indian philosophy. These studies were initially necessitated by my preparing material for teaching the religious class. As said above, we had adopted the *Bhagvat Gita* as our text for the religious class. Not all the teachers, by reason of their previous studies, were qualified to teach that subject, so, in the earlier years, we held classes amongst ourselves for preparing some of our colleagues to discharge satisfactorily their duties as religious teachers. My colleague, V. R. Joshi gave good help in this direction and we read together the whole of the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*. The aim of our religious instruction was to introduce into the daily life of our pupils the rules of discipline enjoined in the *Gita*, supplemented by analogous teachings from the two great epics of India. I spent a few studious years in this interesting work and we had the satisfaction of knowing that, owing to this private preparation amongst ourselves, the quality of our religious instruction rapidly improved in relation to its effect on the daily life of our pupils.

Gradually I began to wander in the direction of *Yoga*

philosophy. From my previous studies in *Purva Mimansa* philosophy and *Dharma Shastra*, in which I had obtained the Master's degree, it was a very easy and natural transition to *Yoga* philosophy. As I then conceived its essential teaching, it provided a short-cut to the realisation of the Divine element in us. To teach at school and study at home; these two high and simple duties, by reason of their sublimity, purity and altruism, led easily to the adoption of the contemplative and ascetic methods of *Yoga* philosophy. I felt that, by deeper study in that subject, it would be possible to accelerate the approach to its ultimate aim, namely an increasing realisation and assertion of the Divine element in us.

In such pure and religious surroundings, I had the opportunity of devoting a few years to the study and practices of *Yoga* philosophy. I devoured with avidity a host of books relating to that subject, not excluding Theosophical literature. The practical teachings of *Yoga* form a self-contained and autonomous code of discipline. It is, in a sense, the culmination of the conceptions of man's relation to the universe, postulated by the *Vedanta* and other systems of Indian philosophy. The theoretical doubts and difficulties which had arisen in my mind during the academic study of these systems found a satisfactory and consolatory solution in the practical teachings of *Yoga* and the code of disciplined life it enjoins. I had then the help of a proficient guide to take me through the earlier stages, when the discipline reflects itself in the increasing health and purity of our physical body and gradually refines our sense-perceptions, so as to make them ultimately able to cognize and comprehend what is ordinarily beyond the region of human cognition.

Such studies would have gone on interminably were they not interrupted by the insistent desire of my mother and grandfather to see me suitably married. For a long time, I withstood this affectionate compulsion, until I was powerless to resist it, being an only offspring among two generations. In May 1899, I got married. I then belonged to a group of reformers who had, by practical experience, realised the urgent need of reforming the marriage system of my community. Many old ceremonials and rituals had lost their significance and usefulness, owing to the advent of new conditions of life and the disappearance of the old ones. Owing to the affluent position which the Pathare Prabhu community

occupied in previous years, these rites and ceremonials had clung to us, though totally unsuited to our altered financial and social conditions. They were, besides, far too expensive and elaborate for an ordinary middle-class family. Marriage festivals, in my time, were spread over a whole fortnight, and, by reason of their acceptance by influential persons, their adoption became a social compulsion beyond the power of the ordinary man to withstand. The reforming group, to which I belonged, had clear notions about wiping out this social tyranny and the insistent desire of my mother and grandfather to see me married on any conditions made it possible for me to stipulate with them that my marriage was to be celebrated in the simplest possible form, furnishing thereby a precedent for the poorer members of my community to follow without embarrassment.

As a student of *Dharma Shastra* I knew what the minimum essentials of a Hindu marriage were, shorn of all the accretions and frivolities which had gathered round them. I, therefore, made a list of the essential ceremonies, including the time they should reasonably occupy and their minimum cost. My principal family Priest was given this list and enjoined to adhere to it strictly. I was then able to cut out costly and elaborate rituals and to limit them to time and to expenditure, not beyond the means of an ordinary member of my community. Long decorative processions, expensive presents, broadcast invitations, musical entertainments, dinner parties, and other social events, which had become by common acceptance a part of the wedding festival, were mercilessly cut out and the ceremony restricted to a few important and significant rituals which I could finish in a few hours and go back to my work.

This was perhaps the most difficult part of my resolve, because it entailed on my family a total deprivation of the social entertainments which our friends and relations expected to be provided, in conformity with the social position and prestige of my family. But even this deprivation, however irksome, my mother and grandfather gracefully agreed to and I quote from a grateful letter I wrote to my grandfather from Lonavla on 23 May 1899, shortly after the event.

Lonavla, 23 May 1899

My dear Grandfather,

Regardless of the bitter cavils and bickerings of many relatives, you nobly made up your mind to stand by me during such a trying ordeal and set your silent yet resolute approval on all my wishes. I feel proud of the confidence you evinced in my judgement.

Your affectionate grandson,
Mukund

Our public school turned out many young men who, in later life, achieved distinction. Amongst them might be prominently mentioned Chintaman Deshmukh, at one time the Governor of the Reserve Bank in Bombay, later the distinguished Finance Minister of the Nehru Government, and at present Chairman of the University Grants Commission. Many other pupils later became prominent Congressmen or public servants, like, for instance, R. S. Padbidri, D. G. Gharpure, M. N. Talpade, A. S. Athalye. A few entered the educational line and became teachers of distinction and popularity, like K. R. Gunjekar, Senior Wrangler and for some time Principal of Elphinstone College, and for a short period, Director of Public Instruction in the State of Bombay.

Our attempts to collect funds in the early stages did not meet with much success but, later, as the popularity of the school grew, enough funds were collected to enable us to purchase a building in a prominent and popular part of Girgaum, which is a stronghold of the Maharashtrian middle-class community in Bombay.

The Institution has since come to occupy a prominent place as a centre of public activities in Bombay and from time to time functions are held seeking to weld the Hindu community into a compact unit, making efforts to popularise the ideals of Hindu life in a broad, tolerant and liberal spirit. It now runs a High School and Middle School for boys and another for girls in Bombay and an upcountry branch school at Palghar. The total number of students now receiving education under its auspices is about 5,000. In 1937, the foundation of our building in Bombay was laid by the then Chief Minister of Bombay, B. G. Kher, and its inauguration was made by G. V. Mavlankar, late Speaker of the House of the People at Delhi. The school at Palghar is situated on land donated by M. D. Bhat, the then Collector of Thana and for a long time

Chief Secretary of the Government of Bombay. On 27 December 1949, was celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Society under the presidency of D. K. Karve, the veteran educationist and reformer of Poona. In course of time, the founders retired from active participation and their places were taken by many public-spirited young men and the work of the Institutions is being conducted, even to the present times, in the old spirit of self-sacrifice and patriotism.

So was fulfilled my intense desire to start my public career with a patriotic effort in education. Is it too much to hope that my equally insistent desire to end my earthly career with a similar educational effort in the higher regions of education will receive equal fruition in the success of the University of Poona, of which Institution I continued to hold during nine and a half years the responsible post of honorary Vice-Chancellor?

The period from January to April 1901, I spent at our country seat at Lonavla in the company of my mother. This opportunity of affectionate contact was most enjoyable at that quiet place. I had then retired from active work at the Aryan Education Society's High School and only occasionally went there to take English and Sanskrit classes with the higher standards during my visits to Bombay. For part of our stay during such visits, we resided in our house at the foot of the famous temple of Mahalaxmi, beyond the present Malabar and Cumballa Hills. According to the traditional belief in my father's family, that temple had been founded, many years ago, by one of our ancestors. The temple then stood on an eminence in picturesque surroundings and from the rear was visible the large expanse of the Indian Ocean. At one time, this temple was very popular amongst the richer members of my community, its approaches being studded with the residences of Pathare Prabhu magnates. The temple held a very popular fair during *Sharadi Navaratra* in the month of October-November, when my family regularly went to stay at our Mahalaxmi house for a month and took part in the festivals connected with the Goddess Mahalaxmi to whom the temple had been dedicated.

There was another temple nearby which was established by a Prabhu millionaire, Dhakji Dadaji. He left many charities behind, and held during his life a coveted position of honour at the Royal Court of Baroda and as a patron of learning.

Both these temples, though founded by members of my community, eventually passed, chiefly owing to its indifference and discare, out of its exclusive control and management and they have now been for some time under the preponderant control of the Gujerati community of Bombay and the Prabhus have been ousted, from their merited share in the celebrations and festivals connected therewith.

While living at Mahalaxmi, my thoughts were divided between two opposite extremes. An entry in my diary, kept regularly about this time, states as of the date 3 January 1901:

I have an intense desire to combine, with active worldly pursuits, the deep erudition of a scholar and the mystic lore and comprehensive charity of a Yogi. But the life I am leading here at present affords no opportunity of success in either. I can observe only so much religious or unworldly detachment as is consistent with my position in my family. I find it difficult to maintain around me an even atmosphere of deep religious fervour and resignation. Nor can I soar to great heights of invigorating worldly pursuits.

Thoughts of entering a British University, preferably Oxford, to give a finishing touch to my education, were gradually taking shape in my mind. Fortunately, the best support I received in this project was from my mother. My grandfather was, however, strongly opposed to the idea, his objections being mainly based on the life of retirement and Yogic studies I had been vigorously pursuing at this time, leading to the formation of habits and temperament unsuited to a European environment. The diet which I took at this time was equally unsuited to the change. Time after time occur sentiments in my diary like the following.

I would have tried completely to forget my project of a visit to a British University but for a lurking hope, not sufficiently well-founded at present, that some day, in the near future, I might cross the ocean and, if this happened, any progress I might make during the interval in the direction of religious resignation and retirement would prove a distinct drawback in a life of worldly activity and vigour.

There were moments when I distrusted my premature longing for quiet retirement at my early age. As my diary records:

I often recall the warning of the British poet Cowper, that to talk of retirement is easy but to maintain an even and unabated longing

for it and to turn it to the fullest use is difficult. Thoughts of retirement from worldly pursuits at early age, when life is usually full of youthful vigour, ambition and energy, prove, in most cases, a precocious and evanescent sentiment and cannot be conceived as a normal development, except perhaps in cases where the feeling arises from a continuous and a deep longing for quiet devotion and unworldliness. Many times, however, such a desire is born of a temporary baulking of worldly ambition, when the impetuous mind forms quixotic resolves, difficult to sustain when the sentiment has weakened. To form such resolves is easy. It is a moment's work and requires a moment's decision, but, connected with it, are long days and restless nights of incipient disappointments, constant periods of rebellious vexation, of recurring clouds, of sullen gloom, and the scorn and ridicule generally associated with the humble and unappreciated obscurity of retirement—these may be oftentimes difficult to bear.

At Lonavla, our residence was in an area where the Maharashtrian celebrities of that time had bungalows. One of them belonged to Mahadeo Govind Ranade, whose great reputation as the maker of modern India had already impressed me. He was besides a member of the Managing Council of the Aryan Education Society. We all looked upon him with great awe and reverence, which, apart from his high intellectual eminence, the majesty of his physical appearance evoked. He was a frequent visitor to my grandfather at Lonavla and discussed political and economic questions of the day. My family therefore was plunged in great grief when, on 17 January 1901, we heard the sorrowful news of his death. The following remarks in my diary indicate the esteem and respect we of the younger generation had for him.

The news came upon us with suddenness and we felt that we had lost—nay all India had—a great soul. His greatness, as it struck me during my contact with him, lay not in his intellectual height, though it was undoubtedly of an uncommon order, but in his indefatigable energy, his versatile attainments and his suave disposition concealed behind a stern exterior. I had not come across anyone who knew better the secret of governing his temper. His patriotism, it always struck me, served him with a leaven in all acts and a happy admixture of a retiring and an active disposition enabled him to win the affections of the serious and the superficial alike. His temperament, in spite of his proverbial reticence, was so accommodating that it was a marvel to observe him conducting himself on critical occasions.

I am inclined to call him not only a Proteus of human talents but also a Proteus of human tempers. In this adaptability, nature had

served him well in the provision of an exterior so innocent and simple looking, that, coupled with the strong command of temper he had made into a habit, he appeared to be most fitted to rise above ordinary mortals merely on the strength of his uncommon intellectual gifts. What struck me further was his patience and sympathy with young men and their pursuits. During my experience of public men I have come to regard this feature of sympathy with young men in an elderly leader as an unmistakable index of greatness. Judged accordingly, Ranade was one of the loftiest Indians living in my time. His practical shrewdness always enabled him to value a rising young man at his true worth and, with his interest in divergent pursuits, he was able to keep up a friendly contact with varying types of young men, in the hope of turning them to account at the right moment. This friendliness, so flattering to the young, grew more and more with his readiness of access and his aversion to the constraint and artificiality of western manners. The powers and energies that nature had given him were most judiciously used by him, and, with the insight and intuition of a master mind, he could easily discover what subject could profitably occupy his attention for public good from time to time. Tilak, his great adversary in politics, once described him as omniscient.

I was at this time devouring religious literature and was gradually diverted to the works of Marathi writers of eminence, amongst which Shridhar Swami's two works *Rama Vijaya* (Life of Rama) and *Hari Vijaya* (Life of Krishna) impressed me deeply.

The need for this reading arose primarily from the necessity of selecting proper material for teaching my wife the principles of the Hindu religion, especially that part of it which exalts and refines our emotions to the perception of a personal God. To a devout Hindu, whatever criticism other religions may make on his conception, a personal God is an affectionate and intimate friend, completely annihilating the distance between his own mortal constitution and the divinity of his God. He speaks and talks to him with the familiarity of an equal, attributing to him his own sentiments of joy and affection. This familiarity has often puzzled the followers of other religions, but it secures, to the Hindu devotee, as it were, the convenience of a "private entry" to his God, to use an expression familiar to court life. Undeterred by any inferiority complex, the Hindu devotee approaches his God for guidance, companionship, exchange of confidences and, in some cases, not altogether rare, for exhortation and admonition to his God for permitting sorrow, injustice and unhappiness to triumph in

this world. The best known instance of this friendly familiarity is to be found in the immortal pages of the *Bhagvat Gita* in passages where Arjuna, permitted to witness the all pervading character of the divine Krishna, realizes the affectionate familiarity with which he had treated Krishna as an equal. He breaks out in what may be described as the most beautiful display of human sentiments in relation to the Divine, couched in the lofty version of the *Bhagvat Gita*. In Chapter XI, Verses 41-45 (Dr. Besant's translation), Arjuna asks for forgiveness for his seeming audacity:

If, thinking Thee but friend, importunate O Krishna! O Yadava! O friend! I cried, unknowing of Thy Majesty, and careless in the fondness of my love; if jesting, I irreverence showed to Thee, at play, reposing, sitting or at meals, alone, or with my friends, forgive my error, O Thou boundless one.

Father of the worlds, of all that moves and stands, worthier of reverence than the Guru's self, there is none like to Thee, who passeth Thee! Pre-eminent Thy power in all the Worlds. Therefore, I fall before Thee; with my body I worship as is fitting; bless Thou me. As father with the son, as friend with friend, with the beloved as lover; bear with me. I have seen that which none hath seen before, my heart is glad, yet faileth me for fear; Show me, O God, Thine other form again—Mercy, O God of Gods, home of all worlds.

In Shridhar Swami's works this reconciliation between the divine and the anthropomorphic conception of God comes out best. In many places, he seeks the aid of pantheistic conceptions—"God residing in beautiful nature." An appreciation of this conception, in my time, had been totally neglected in the system of education. My diary entry of 20 July 1901 dealing with this question, with reference to the teaching we gave in our schools, reads as follows:

This was a branch of instruction we assiduously impressed on the minds of our boys; since we had observed that an appreciation of the charms of nature had been totally neglected in the instruction of our times and required speedy and early attention. Nature, we taught, was the wisest, gentlest and holiest of teachers; it gave us plenty of lessons but in a language which was needed to be learnt not by means of an alphabet or through books, but by observation and silent understanding. The "open sesame", the secret *Mantra*, which unclothed the divine mysteries of nature had to be learnt in life, by observation and habit. Nature was all a miracle and a profound marvel in itself but

it failed to strike the unobservant, owing to its everyday recurrence and the consequent familiarity.

I then began to get ready for leaving India. My unfamiliarity with European ways of life was perplexing and caused amusement even to myself. But kind friends helped me to get over the initial difficulties. I read also many guides on this subject. I dipped into Latin and French but my study of these two languages did not exceed the minimum necessary for practical needs and for getting ready for the preliminary academical tests in England. I never succeeded, however, in making any change in my diet, which, though initially non-vegetarian, had been replaced by the pure and restricted meal suited to religious austerities. A few days before the time of my departure for England, my grandfather lost his younger brother, leaving children younger than myself, but this calamity and the consequent increase in his domestic responsibility made no difference in his resolve to let me go. Sir Lawrence Jenkins, the then eminent and popular Chief Justice of Bombay, helped me to grow out of the earlier stages of my unfamiliarity. His great esteem for my grandfather induced him to take the trouble. So did several other friends of my grandfather who placed their knowledge and experience of English life at my disposal. My grandfather himself had several friends in England in good positions, many of whom he had known well in India and I provided myself with letters of introduction to them.

Armed with all these letters, I sailed for England on 20 April 1901 by the P & O boat, *Egypt*, which was considered one of the best in the Company's fleet at that time. On board the ship, I soon got over my strange feeling of unfamiliarity, but the difficulty I found hard to surmount was of food. This difficulty did not decrease with the progress of the voyage. The difference between my simple and restricted diet in India and the food that appeared to be available on board with ease affected my health in a few days' time and the increasing cold weather, as the voyage progressed beyond Port Said, made my health worse. My Indian fellow-passengers were very kind, except a couple of them who kept nagging at me for getting ill. This continued until we reached London via Marseilles. I put up in London at a comfortable hotel in Northumberland Avenue but I was driven to consult, in a

couple of days, two English physicians in connexion with a stomach complaint, which in India is lightly thought of, but has great terrors for the British physician. They advised me to avoid the risk of living in London in such health, but return to India before it grew worse. I accepted their advice and left London after a short stay. Thus the apprehensions of my grandfather about my difficulty with unfamiliar diet and surroundings unfortunately proved more justified than I had expected.

After my return to Bombay, and, in spite of the consequent disappointment, my mother encouraged me to read for the 2nd LL. B. examination in Bombay and I succeeded in passing it at the end of the year 1902.

After this success, the desire to finish my legal studies at Oxford revived and I left for England again in April 1903. On reaching there, my first effort was to obtain entrance at the Balliol College at Oxford with the ultimate aim of obtaining a B. C. L. degree. I had with me the necessary testimonials and many letters of introduction to the then Master of Balliol, Dr. Edward Caird. I had read in India his works on religion and philosophy and, forming my conceptions about him from his writings, I was full of the hope that I would get a friendly reception from a philosopher of such eminence. With high expectations, therefore, I presented myself one morning at the Master's Lodge at Balliol. I found a stern looking, indifferently dressed Scotsman with typical features working in his study. It was not at that time necessary to seek entrance through the intervention of the High Commissioner for India in London and I am not sure whether such an official existed in those days to act as an intermediary. But my experience, in later years, of this official, remunerated partially from Indian revenues, was that he was more often a hindrance and obstacle than a help to Indian candidates seeking admission to British Institutions. I placed before Dr. Caird my certificates and introductions. He read them with attention and said, "Our quota of Indian students is full and I can give you no admission." In my simplicity, I could not comprehend the import of a "quota" in educational opportunities. So I replied, "I have come from many miles away, from a country which, in the days of its ancient greatness, had universities to which scholars came from long distances, taking sometimes as many as three years

to reach India on foot. There were no 'quotas' in these Indian Universities and students from abroad were freely admitted to participate in the life of the Universities and, after a few years residence and study, they could return to their homes after deriving the fullest benefit of the residence and instruction provided at the Universities. The more distant their home was, the more sure their admission and residence." "I have come," I added, "with similar hopes to seek admission here and I do hope that I will not be turned away." "You can, in that case," replied Dr. Caird, "join a non-collegiate institution and take your degree in due course." I replied, "I have degrees galore behind me. I have not come here to gain one more degree but to seek the benefit of the corporate life of this great University, which can be obtained only by residence and from full participation in the activities of the students." In the end, I could not persuade the learned Doctor, and I dropped the idea, after revising my notions of India being an important member of the British Commonwealth.

In later years, some friends influentially connected with Oxford like the late Marquess of Lothian and Dr. Edward Thompson, persuaded that University to confer on me a Doctorate of Civil Laws. In the customary Latin speech, which the Public Orator delivered on that occasion, a reference was made to this youthful desire of mine and it was added that the degree of D.C.L. then being conferred on me would compensate, it was hoped, in some measure, for the disappointment I had felt in earlier years. Thus ended this episode. In later years, however, whenever I visited Oxford, which was on frequent occasions, I received the most hospitable reception from some of its great men, from Mr. Lionel Curtis to Sir Michael Sadler and the Masters of some colleges.

I had not much time to brood over my disappointment at Oxford; for, a short time after returning to London, I succeeded in obtaining a place in the legal chambers of Mark L. Romer. He had, at that time, a distinguished place as a successful junior at the Bar. He was socially very well connected, being the grandson of the famous Mark Lemon of the English *Punch* and a son of Sir Robert Romer, the Senior Wrangler of his time, and later a Lord Justice of Appeal. Owing to these high connexions and his own merits, Romer's Chambers were regarded as "aristocratic", to use the expression then current amongst the younger men of the Bar. In obtaining this

opportunity, uncommon for an Indian student, I had the help, among other friends, of Sir Lawrence Jenkins, the Chief Justice of Bombay who was, in his junior days, an occupant of the same chambers. Legal Chambers in London have a kind of continuous existence; one set of occupants disappears, another set comes in. A kind of good-will is attached to the Chambers, very much like, though somewhat different, from the custom in the medical world of England, where a medical man passes his medical practice to a new occupant, along with his good-will amongst his patients.

Romer's Chambers were at 3 New Square, Lincoln's Inn. Nearby, Augustine Birrell and F. E. Smith (later Lord Birkenhead, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for India) had their rooms. My first reception in these Chambers was hostile. I had three British colleagues, who had finished college education and were studying law. Their social connections were high with County families and they entertained a prejudice against Indians, then common in these quarters. Romer's pupil room was in a garret on the third floor, where we all worked together, cramped in a small space. It was autumn when I began and I was then assigned a seat near a window opening upon New Square Gardens. My companions began their teasing in various ways, so characteristic of vigorous young life. Romer had some suspicion about this possibility, for, every evening when I went in to say goodnight to him, which was our practice if we stayed on till closing time, he asked me whether everything was all right in the pupil room. I invariably replied in the affirmative. It was my practice to attend Chamber at ten in the morning, go on till one, when I had lunch in the Common Room of Lincoln's Inn to which I belonged. We worked thereafter till tea time at four. The tea was prepared in the Chamber, my colleagues brewing it in the grate. I then worked till seven or seven-thirty, when Romer left. Very often we left together, riding on a bus top. Though Romer was a rich man, he kept to the modest practice of juniors in those days and very rarely had his carriage in attendance to take him home. For the first few days, my companions were very surly and gruff and excluded me from sharing their tea. But when they found that this behaviour made no impression on me, their teasing increased, until one day I found an ink-pot spilt on my table, spoiling the books and papers lying there. Then I thought



My mother SONABAI



As a student in London, 1903-1905

that it was time that I gave them a straight talk. I said, "If you fellows think that I have come here from 7,000 miles away to be frightened by these miserable tactics, you are jolly well mistaken. I am not proposing to take this quarrel to Mr. Romer but will live it down and unless you make up your minds to put up with an Indian as colleague, life will be troublesome; for this game of teasing is one at which I can play equally well." After this quiet remonstrance, one or two incidents occurred which wore out their prejudice and, in a few days, we became such good friends that, on a subsequent occasion, when they knew that I had been denied admission at a London hotel on the ground of my colour, my friends stormed the office of the Manager and threatened to report his behaviour to the Home Secretary. As I later discovered, on getting better accustomed to English ways, this initial behaviour was characteristic of English youth and with this knowledge, purchased after some experience, I had no difficulty later in getting on in England.

While working in Chambers another incident occurred which threw more light on the make up of the youthful mind of England. A young lady, closely related to a Law Lord, applied to Romer for admission as a pupil in his Chamber. Naturally enough, before giving her admission, Romer consulted his pupils. I voted in her favour with my Indian notions about women's rights, but, curiously enough, my British colleagues unanimously voted against her, remarking that they did not want a "flapper" in the pupil room. This word was then new to me but I came to know it better when we developed a heated controversy in our room during the time Romer was considering the matter. Ultimately, he decided against her admission, as the bulk of his pupils were against her entry and her life might possibly be unhappy. Later, the lady rose to distinction in the legal world and was quite a celebrity when I met her many years afterwards at a London reception.

Life in Chambers was very quiet. I was given various cases for study. They generally related to high-class social life or business transactions and, in the course of my stay there for a couple of years, I got acquainted with a wide range of legal matters, some of which led me into the Law Courts in the company of Romer or his "devils". The Judges I often saw in the Court were, Kekewich, Byrne, Buckley, and Vaughan

Williams of the Court of Appeal.

When, later, I contrasted the simplicity of the British High Court with the pomposity of the Bombay High Court, the contrast was striking, both in regard to the Court and its surroundings and in the behaviour of the Bench. This British simplicity struck me still more forcefully when, at a much later date, I occupied a seat on the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council, at Westminster. Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court in my time (now called the Supreme Court of India) and I, as a Puisne Judge, endeavoured to reproduce the simplicity of British Courts in the Federal Court. But the notions of one of our colleagues and of the then British Government at Delhi were opposed to the removal of all pomp and pageantry from the affairs of that Court. The Government of India held, in those days, the common but mistaken belief that, to strike orientals with awe and respect, pompous ceremonials were necessary. What struck me most in the British High Court was the quiet and dignified surroundings in which business went on on the Chancery side. Shouting at witnesses, calling out of parties' names, loud comments on the opposite counsel, reprimands from the Bench, and common jokes and ribald laughter—all these were singularly absent in the High Court which I visited from time to time.

Among the men at the Bar who impressed me in those days, I can well recall the name of Buckmaster (later Lord Buckmaster). My diary records as of the date, 6 July 1903 that, "I saw him leading Mr. Romer in a case before Mr. Justice Buckley, relating to a Shakespearian Company's action for unauthorised use of its Advertising Station. Buckmaster appeared a striking figure, with a smart and intelligent appearance, clear and attractive delivery compelling attention." In later life, I was put in mind of him by a lawyer who occasionally appeared before the Judicial Committee, namely Sir Wilfred Greene, a Lord Justice of Appeal for some time, and later a Law Lord and a member of the Judicial Committee. On the occasion mentioned above, Buckmaster opened his case with a simple consecutive narrative, gradually unfolding the intricacies of the case in terms free from legal jargon, disclosing the human element in the case. This lucidity, as I found later sitting on the Judicial Committee, was a characteristic possession of most of the top men who appeared

in Indian cases before us. Sir Wilfred Greene and later Sir Cyril Radcliffe (as he then was) were the best practitioners of such lucid and effective advocacy.

Another figure that made a great impression on my mind was Sir Rufus Isaacs (later Lord Reading). I went to hear him in the criminal trial of Whittaker Wright who had perpetrated a financial fraud of great complexity and dimensions. Whittaker Wright was, by common consent, a great financial genius but he misused his gifts and found himself in the prisoners' dock. I can well recall the prefatory speech which Rufus Isaacs made as the prosecuting Counsel:

My Lords, we are dealing with a personality who, if he had chosen the right course in life when he reached the parting of the ways, would have risen to a high pinnacle of national usefulness. But, today, he is in a different place. But that does not alter the fact of his unrivalled knowledge of finance. I hope to show, when I close my cross-examination, the various devious frauds he has been guilty of. I shall only ask for one indulgence from the Bench, namely not to allow the prisoner unduly long time to reply to my questions.

With this preface, Rufus Isaacs began his cross-examination, involving, oftentimes, sums of four and five figures, with scarcely a note to aid his memory. It was a striking performance, not only of forensic skill but of reliable and faultless memory.

Later, when I came to know him well as Lord Reading as a Member of the British Delegation at the Indian Round Table Conference (1930-34), he held, in my opinion, the foremost place for power of clear exposition, for grasp of facts and ability to impress a point of view without raising opposition. I reminded him of the Whittaker Wright trial and asked him the secret of his retentive memory. His answer was the same as that of Inverarity of the Bombay Bar on another occasion, namely that "The more you rely on your memory, the better will it serve you." "It is like a rubber band", added Inverarity, "the more you stretch it, the more will it yield."

I have an equally good recollection of the great cricketer, "Ranji", whom I used to see frequently at cricket matches at Lords cricket ground and at Kennington Oval. What a personality! Thousands of British men and women adored him, and, in the worship of his skill, all sense of a different

nationality was drowned. When he stepped majestically out of the pavilion, what a hum of admiration went forth! As a young Indian, I used to feel so proud that one of us could evoke such admiration. It was much later, at the Indian Round Table Conference in London, that I came to know him intimately. In many ways, he resembled Reading in his grasp of facts and power of clear exposition. To these gifts, Ranji added an uncommon popularity with the British people, which was, in my experience, equalled only by one other Indian, namely His Highness the late Aga Khan. This was brought home to me on a memorable occasion when the then Aga Khan had, during the session of the Round Table Conference, published, in the *London Times*, a particularly hostile attack on Hindus and Sikhs. Shrinivas Shastri, Sapru and myself thought that a prompt reply was necessary. It was prepared and I took it personally to Sir Geoffrey Dawson and Mr. Barrington Ward, then the two leading men of the *London Times*. They both were of the view that they would find it easier to publish our reply, if we could get Ranji to add his signature. He alone would counter-weigh, they said, the great popularity of the Aga Khan. This was a wonderful tribute to Ranji's position in high British circles but he was unfortunately out of town on that day and his signature could not therefore be obtained and the Aga Khan's letter remained uncontradicted.

While in London as a law student, I used my time most profitably in getting familiar with as many phases of British life as I could contact. There were no film shows in those days, but occasionally Shakespearian and other theatricals were staged. The theatre houses in the Strand, Haymarket, and St. James's Street were popular with us and among the plays put up for popular entertainment there were a few execrable ones, viciously parodying Indian life like, for instance, "Cingalee".

I record here, with great pleasure, the occasion when, at a Theosophical function, Mrs. Besant, in London at that time, introduced me to a pious and rational-minded Theosophist, Mr. Ernest Udny of the Home Civil Service, then a high official at the G. P. O. With him, I formed a life-long friendship which terminated, a few years ago, on his death at the ripe old age of 80 years. He knew Pushtu among other languages, his ancestors having served on the Northern Frontier of India.

He was thus able to maintain a good balance between Hindu and Muslim cultures and did a great deal to rationalize British public opinion on Indian questions.

After my experience of Oxford mentioned above, I generally avoided visiting other centres of learning but I readily joined, along with some other Indian friends, a party conducted round Cambridge by some important persons connected with that University. I had seen a great deal of Oxford and its surroundings and was therefore desirous of seeing Cambridge and its arrangements, including its charms of nature.

On 27 July 1903, I attended the Ladies' Night annual debate of the Hardwicke Society. That Society was then famous for the instructive and interesting debates held from time to time. The subject, this time, was, "The increasing cheapness of books is prejudicial to the best interests of literature". Prof. Edmund Gosse, author of some books on English literature, spoke in support of the motion. It was a disappointing speech and appeared many times puerile in argument. His main contention was that the dignity of literature was a good deal impaired by the sordid calculations which cheapness of literature engendered. He was opposed by Mr. Augustine Birrell, an intensely amusing person who really spoke good sense. His chief argument was that the popularisation of wholesome literature did real service to the people. As for costliness, he humorously added that Prof. Gosse's books cost more in the market than a complete set of Shakespeare's works. Birrell was followed by a number of speakers, notably ladies, presumably literary, and by the Common Sergeant of London and by the Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn. Then Gosse replied, giving up his ground altogether. Votes were then taken, with an overwhelming majority against Gosse's motion. Altogether I thought that the whole performance was meagre and certainly inferior to similar debates in India.

One of the persons for whom Indian students had very great respect and reverence in those times was Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma, formerly a resident of Bombay, then permanently settled in London. His popularity increased as the Indian Government's dislike for him grew. We thought that he had been unfairly treated by that Government and had consequently left India. He was influentially connected in India and was a son-in-law of a shipping magnate of Bombay,

Chhabildas Lallubhai. A visit to Shyamji's residence was, therefore, a great event and on 2 August 1903, in the company of an Indian friend who knew him well, I visited his residence at Highgate, a suburb of London. The following account of that visit occurs in my diary:

From King's Cross Station, we went to Highgate and reached the quiet house of the Pandit. We were shown into a well-furnished drawing room and, in a few minutes, Mrs. Shyamji walked in, a short pleasant-featured lady of about five and forty, with a genial smile on her face. She was followed on her heels by her husband, a tall majestic person, with a well-formed head, broad intellectual brow, dressed in plain easy clothing, that had made a sufficient concession to English taste without losing its oriental shape. In a minute, he put us at our ease. We talked over a cup of tea. The conversation was general, until we repaired, after tea, to the Pandit's study upstairs. It was a quiet snug room, having all the marks of a favourite resort of a deep scholar. The Pandit's Library, so far as I could see, contained a choice selection of books. The Pandit is an M.A., B.C.L. of Oxford, and ex-Diwan of Indian States (Junagadh, Ratlam and Udaipur). His views about Indian politics were ultra radical, which fact appeared to have necessitated his resolve to spend the rest of his life in London. With extraordinary candour, he showed us the whole correspondence between the Indian Government and himself, his removal from the Diwanship of the Indian States—a mass of papers which revealed the rotten state of affairs usually existing in an Indian State, and the tyranny of the British Government cloaked under an astute semblance of justice. In the meanwhile, dinner was announced and we repaired to partake of a luxurious oriental repast. From the dining room window was visible a long stretch of English country, misty in the evening dusk, and I was greatly struck by the homely appearance of the Pandit's house and its rustic surroundings. The dinner combined the exquisite neatness of the English table with the flavoury amplitude of an Indian meal. There were brinjals, pulow, fish, shira and pudding and finally some fruit, which had been prepared in a peculiar way—the previous evening a little opening had been made in it and sugar introduced and the entire fruit hung up overnight in the open air so that by the next day the sugar melted and saturated the inside, giving it a cool juicy sweetness, as if natural.

After dinner, we again repaired to the study and talked about politics, metaphysics, Vivekanand, Theosophy etc. The Pandit's views on politics were, as stated above, ultra radical and the burden of his grievance was, as he said, the expedient hypocrisy of our Congress leaders and their time-serving insincerity. The Pandit was speaking with animation, attacking, with unique poignancy, Ranade and his "feather-nesting

school" as he called it. He narrated one or two painful incidents regarding Pherozeshah Mehta's vindictiveness in public life. About Vivekanand, he did not hold a high opinion, adding that the Swami had been his guest at Udaipur for nearly a week, and during that time, the Pandit had occasions to observe many of the Swami's habits, which the Pandit thought were inconsistent with his saintliness. That the Swami was intelligent, he admitted, but he maintained that he was devoid of sincerity of purpose. We then reverted to talk on Theosophy. The Pandit, as an Arya Samajist, was at one time interested in the fusion of the Arya Samaj with Theosophy. He gave an uncomplimentary account of the activities of Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant. He considered the latter to be under a constant spell of self-hypnotism. The Pandit does not believe in the possibility of a super-conscious awakening and made light of the claims of kindred mystic sciences. He railed with sarcasm against astrology and made my Indian friend look very uncomfortable, because he had great faith in the potency of that science in foretelling the future. We left the Pandit's place at about eleven at night and returned to London."

The Pandit later started a newspaper called the *Sociologist* to propagate his views on Indian freedom. He was also responsible for instituting a set of scholarships for Indian students, to enable them to receive education at Oxford and these scholarships were widely availed of by Indian students.

I had several occasions to spend week-ends at the country seats of my British friends. This gave me most happy and instructive opportunities of getting acquainted with the social and family life of the British people. It is an admirable feature of that life that the well-to-do Britisher has, in most cases, a country seat, sometimes ancestral, where he spends his leisure when he can do so. One sees the British people at their best during such cordial contact. Some of these seats own extensive grounds, parcelled out into smaller holdings or farms, let out to tenants of long standing. The owner of the residence, sometimes called the manor house, takes great delight in playing the landlord or squire, treating his tenantry, on customary occasions, to sumptuous hospitality, mixing freely with their families on terms of cordiality and esteem. This feature of British country life has had the greatest attraction for me, because it stood in striking contrast with what I had seen in India. The estates were, in some cases, most extensive, more than several hundreds of acres, and I once asked, during recent times, an important member of the Socialist Party, then in power, why, in their pursuit of

socialistic ideals, they allowed such extensive estates to remain in the possession, often hereditary, of these country magnates, instead of acquiring them for the state or splitting them into small fragments, each too small for its allotted owner to acquire territorial influence. His reply was characteristic. He said, "We are not anxious to destroy this class of landed gentry. It has been evolved during centuries of power, leisure and affluence. Experience has proved," he added, "that it is very proper that, in this country, extensive lands and their produce should be appropriated to support certain families in affluence, to produce senators, philosophers and heroes, for the service and defence of the State or, in other words, that a great part of the income of such lands should go to an opulent nobility and gentry, who are to serve their country in Parliament, in the Army and Navy, in the departments of science and the liberal professions. The leisure, independence and high ideas, which the enjoyment of wealth affords, have enabled them to raise Britain to the highest pinnacle of glory and until we find," he added, "another equally efficacious method of developing that haughty spirit, independence and deep thought which the possession of great wealth often creates and maintains, we will let this class of estate owners live, making use of them for the needs of the State on suitable occasions." He then mentioned some instances when the members of the nobility had been successful in rendering meritorious services to the State. He went on to add, "It will be some time before we create such a class in our Socialist Party. Until that happens, it would be impolitic to destroy this class only out of theoretical adherence to socialistic dogmas." These views of the socialist member are, I think, worthy of the consideration of the Delhi Government.

The social features of such week-end visits are almost similar. One reaches the residence of the host on a Friday evening. A car or a carriage meets one at the rustic railway station. One is taken to the host's house, often a magnificent mansion, approached by a stately avenue and surrounded by a delightfully wooded country. One receives a most cordial welcome from the family and, after some interesting conversation conducted with extreme decorum and politeness, dinner follows, when the Indian guest has to take in the principal lady of the house to whose right he sits. Animated conversation follows during dinner, in preparing which the tastes,

likes and dislikes of the guest have been oftentimes most studiously considered. A few British guests are generally present, selected from the country families or from well-known members of the learned professions or from Parliament and sometimes from among men of local importance. At the end of the dinner, there is usually a game of cards (whist, before bridge came into vogue) or, if the party were so inclined, the younger members join in old-fashioned dancing (in my time, the polka, quadrille, or lancers, if the party was sufficiently large). Then comes bed-time, when the host usually takes the guest round to his bed-room with a candle in hand, taking care to point out the conveniences obtainable during the night. Breakfast follows the next morning, served without the aid of servants; each person helping himself to the courses kept ready on a sideboard. Then a drive or ramble in the country, visiting places of interest in the neighbourhood, sometimes a Norman tower as at Colchester, or an old Roman bridge as at Crowmarsh near Wallingford in Berkshire. Occasionally, the guest is taken to see the market town, neat and crowded, with the nearby village inn, possessing large stables, once used for coach horses and now lying unused. Sometimes, one goes fishing or hunting, according to the wishes of the house party.

If it is a Sunday, the guest accompanies the family to the village church and occupies the ancestral or reserved pew and listens to the sermon, often more full of conventional devotion than of any "new thought", though on a couple of occasions I had the pleasure of listening to such thought from the village church pulpit. On returning home, an elaborate lunch is served at which Yorkshire pudding frequently finds a place on the menu. Then follows some rest before tea time. Then early tea and a visit to the county families, whose members are often invited to participate in the tea; delightful conversation ensues, interspersed sometimes with a game of croquet on the lawn, unless one feels vigorous enough, after a heavy meal, to have a few sets on the lawn tennis court. A late dinner in the evening, the servants very often being very wisely permitted to enjoy leave for the evening, in which case the younger members of the family help the guest; then a brief conversation or cards, an early return to bed to get ready in time on Monday morning to catch a crowded train to London.

Sometimes, the stay is extended till Tuesday and, during Christmas, in a couple of cases, I had to stay for a week or ten days, during which time, dancing, sometimes a fancy dress ball or two, or shooting excursions relieved the monotony of the long visit. In certain houses, Christmas is celebrated by prayers of the family and by visits of parties of Christmas carol singers, which were treated with great respect and rewarded with money. Occasionally Christmas excursions into the open country were particularly pleasant, food being provided in bijou breakfast or luncheon baskets.

I paid some week-end visits to the homes of Britishers who, after amassing large fortunes in India in official or professional positions, had returned, in the evening of their life, to spend it in England. In many cases, they expended the bulk of their fortunes in purchasing estates in the country and lived there in peaceful comfort, adding to their resources sometimes by the income of farming. Their menages varied in a few particulars, their cordiality was excellent, but interspersed occasionally with utterances or display of sentiments which, however casual or innocent, oftentimes offended my sensibility as an Indian. The cuisine and appointments reminded me of the pomp enjoyed in India and often there was an ostentatious display of importance regretfully left behind in India, beyond recall. The guests were often drawn from Anglo-Indian families in retirement, congregating in London at South Kensington. These guests were not always as mindful, as the host and hostess were, of Indian susceptibilities. I remember, for instance, one occasion when, after the hostess had introduced me to an Anglo-Indian guest as a friend from India, the guest remarked, "Oh! you come from India, what a glorious land for servants!" The hostess agreed, adding "Oh! Indian servants! how obedient, uncomplaining, loyal and satisfied with little!"

These Britons of that time were not without affection for India, but it was of a superior, patronising type, confined to Indian *khansamas*, butlers and bearers, the only India they knew in their time, oblivious of the fact that there was another India growing outside their daily contact. They were proud of India as a British possession. All these views were, however, expressed so innocently that, instead of feeling hurt, I was often amused at the complete ignorance of these people of the India that was gradually growing in importance and

vitality. Things were worse, if the family had a son or a nephew serving in India as an official. In such cases, the views mentioned above received a vigorous replenishing, with a fresh dose of sentiment conveyed in the young official's letters or by his periodical visits to England.

During my visits to such families, I was sometimes troubled by a guest or the hostess with a request to read her palm, in the belief, which some unworthy Indians had sedulously fostered, that an Indian generally possessed, as it were, a congenital knowledge of astrology and palmistry. In these surroundings, it was very infrequent that I met a Britisher whose sentiments were not coloured by thoughts of England's domination in India. In most cases, however, my host and hostess, notwithstanding their habitual opinions and frailties, were most kind and attentive, and I am sure that they would have felt very unhappy if they had discovered that their remarks about India might cause pain to me.

Speaking of public functions in London, for which the ordinary Britisher shows great fondness, I could find time to see only a few. One of them was the procession of the Supreme Court Judges on 24 October 1903. At the end of the long vacation of that Court, lasting from August to October every year, this procession is held, according to ancient custom, to mark the beginning of the new legal year and, because of this significance, I found time to witness this show. It passed through the Strand, entered the Hall of the Law Courts, where a large number of ladies had gathered, mostly the friends and relatives of the Judges. The Lord Chancellor headed the procession, the Lord Justices of Appeal followed. Then came the Puisne Judges, the rear being brought up by King's Counsel dressed in long flowing robes. It was an interesting show of the year. Large crowds watched it in silence. My diary of that date states:

It was an astonishing piece of drollery, not altogether imposing. But I felt that it had its usefulness, at one time, in the legal life of England, when the public demanded some overt announcement that the Courts had started sitting and justice could be had without delay.

The popular reception of this procession indicated that a British crowd could be as fond of show as an Indian one, except that it is better controlled in its demonstration by a

more friendly police than in India.

On a subsequent occasion I took the opportunity of visiting the House of Commons to watch an Indian debate. I had long hoped for this pleasure but it was not easy to get the permit which enables you to enter the gallery for strangers. But a friend fortunately secured one for my use and I visited the House on 13 August 1903. As I have just said, it was the occasion of a debate on an Indian question and I thought the visit would repay itself by the knowledge I would obtain of the proceedings in the House of Commons when Indian questions were on the anvil.

My diary reads as follows:

We began our sight-seeing with the procession of the Speaker and were admitted into the gallery exactly at two o'clock. The House of Commons is very picturesquely built, with cushioned seats for members and a canopied raised seat for the Speaker, a separate gallery for reporters, ladies and visitors respectively. The motions for the day were important. The Secretary of State for India, Lord George Hamilton, began a lengthy speech in introduction of the budget, to which the House, already very thin, listened with by no means close attention. There must have been about thirty members present in all. Lord George Hamilton's speech was, as usual, very optimistic, boasting of vast surpluses in India. Altogether, it struck me as the vapid utterance of an easy-minded official, having no conception of the heavy responsibilities reposed on him. His speech was followed by a demand, supported by a large number of speakers, to have, in view of the large surpluses in India, a total abolition of the import duties imposed in India on English goods. The speeches made in support of this motion were conspicuous by their total disregard for the interests of the Indian producer and were based on the principle of free trade. Earl Percy, the Under Secretary of State for India, replied in a vigorous speech, in which, it seemed that, without using so many words, he was mainly harping on the principle of protection to the Indian industries from foreign aggression. The speech of this young nobleman struck me as more mindful of Indian interests than that of his Chief. The House then divided, members, who had not even attended the debate, took part in the voting and the motion was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

After this, was taken up discussion regarding the proposed arrangement to make India bear a part of the expenses of maintaining a white garrison in South Africa.

Sir M. Bownugree initiated opposition to this proposal, not however as a valiant Knight but in a weak apologetic way. His speech was a rigmarole, innocent of all logic and expressed in language which

might have been better. I could not avoid laughing, though the occasion was far too weighty for such levity. I shall no longer wonder that Indian affairs are so little popular in the House of Commons, for, looking to the learning and qualifications of the person who is supposed to be the champion of Indian causes, it is not a matter of surprise that the destinies of India are so lightly disposed of. After Sir M. Bhownugree had finished, Sir Charles Dilke made a long speech. It was a well-reasoned logical utterance, though not relieved by any flashes of eloquence; nor even sentiment. He spoke severely, so much indeed that Mr. Broderick had to rise after him to reply to his comments. Mr. Broderick spoke forcibly but in a halting style. He took a sturdy Britisher's view of the situation and assured his hearers that the proposed arrangement was entirely in the interest of India and made at the suggestion of Indian Military experts, though the proposal, he admitted, might cost India a vast drain of money. I could not help feeling that his statements, in any event, were candid. My view is that it is these so-called experts, as also the rose-coloured speeches of the Indian Secretary of State, that cause misconception in the popular mind about India's real circumstances and these proposals, which seemed to us Indians as manifestly unjust to India, are yet the logical sequel to the official utterances of the Indian Ministers. Today's debate gave me a very disappointing view of the House of Commons and of the deliberations of that body which did not appear to rise very high. I felt that there had been a sad fall from the days of Gladstone and Brougham. Altogether, I was very much disillusioned and the whole debate struck me as in no way superior in argument, dignity and finesse to the deliberations of an Indian Debating Society. I was so sorely disappointed that I offered to leave many times but as my colleagues wanted to sit out the whole debate, I left them at 7-30. They went again after nine o'clock but, feeling low in spirits with what I had seen, I came home and went to bed.

On 14 October 1903, I took my first law examination in England. In my time, I had taken several examinations in India, ending with a Master's and a Law graduate's degree, and I was, therefore, anxious to compare the methods adopted in India in dealing with examinees with those which obtained in England. The examination began in the morning at ten and was held in Gray's Inn Hall and I could then discover that the arrangements were entirely different from those in India and showed a high regard for the convenience of the students and a deference to their susceptibilities. Though there were about 200 students, there was no bustle, no unceremonious scramble as in India, no suspicion of dis-

honesty and, in fact, we were treated throughout as gentlemen, which could not be said of the treatment accorded to us in Bombay. It brought home to me a vivid recollection of one examination conducted by the University of Bombay, when one of the officials of the University had improvised a small alcove, where he sat and, through a peep-hole, with the aid of a pair of binoculars, watched, most of the time, the students busy in writing their answers, to discover whether anybody was "copying" or was guilty of any similar malpractices. The paper at the English Law Examination was a fair one and went to test, not unmercifully, the practical knowledge of the students. I found the paper tolerably easy and solved it to my satisfaction. The *viva voce* examination was equally satisfactory, except for one question rather too technical to be answered on the spot.

After finishing my legal studies, I was called to the Bar in the Hilary Term of 1905. My call was moved by Lord Alverstone, Chief Justice of England, and seconded by Lord Justice Romer of the Court of Appeal. It was not merely an empty honour. It helped me, in course of time, in obtaining easy admission on the rolls of the High Court of Bombay. Sir Lawrence Jenkins was then Chief Justice and he strongly held the view that all persons who, after a call in England, sought admission as advocates in the High Court of Bombay, should have spent full twelve terms (three years) in England, including a year's reading in English Chambers. In my case, however, as I had been already entered on the Roll of the Bombay High Court after my passing the LL.B. examination in India, I obtained, under the regulations of the Inns of Court in London, a dispensation of four terms, with the result that instead of keeping twelve terms in England I was able to finish with only eight terms. I apprehended some difficulty, owing to this reason, in obtaining admission into the High Court of Bombay and I, therefore, took all precautions in the matter, including the support of these distinguished men in my call to the Bar. I also obtained a diploma to practise from the Crown Office in London, enabling me to do so throughout the U.K. Armed with these safeguards, I returned to Bombay in March 1905.

Immediately thereafter, I applied to the Registrar of the Bombay High Court for admission as an Advocate. When I sent in the certificates of my call, supported by these di-

tinguished men, along with the Diploma to practise in the United Kingdom, it was difficult for Sir Lawrence Jenkins, in spite of his strong views in the matter, to deny admission. In some cases, he had previously compelled the applicants to return to England and keep four more terms. I pointed out, however, the impossibility of this course, because having obtained a Diploma to practise in the United Kingdom, I was a full-fledged barrister and I would not, in consequence, be permitted to attend dinners and courses of lectures any longer. Sir Lawrence took some time to consider the matter because he thought that, if he made an exception in my favour, it would look invidious and would render nugatory the strict rule he had been enforcing. Eventually, however, he realised the difficulty and permitted my enrolment as an Advocate in the High Court of Bombay. Incidentally, this opened the way to admission for a few other friends who stood in similar predicament and had waited in London to hear about the decision in my case.

I was accordingly sworn in as an Advocate on Monday, the 17th of April, 1905. The ceremony consisted in appearing before the Chief Justice and the Judge who sat with him (Justice Batty), shaking hands with them and accepting their congratulations and good wishes. After I had done this and returned to my seat in the Court, a Brief was placed in my hands by a distinguished firm of Indian Solicitors relating to a dispute concerning a prosperous mill. I felt happy that I had a case to conduct within a few minutes of my admission. My opponents in that case were two distinguished friends—Bahadurji and Jamshed Kanga, one of whom is fortunately still living and continues to uphold the noble traditions of the profession in the High Court.

Thus I began my legal practice which I continued until the time I was appointed a Judge of the Federal Court of India in March 1937. The announcement took place in that month, but I took up the duties of that office in September 1937.

Of my professional life of 32 years in the High Court of Bombay, I shall avoid saying much. The fortunes of a young barrister in his struggling days can have little interest for the general public. I shall, therefore, touch only on those incidents in my career which have, directly or indirectly, a public aspect. I shall, however, say briefly that success came

to me more speedily and in ampler measure than I had expected. When I started practice, I consulted a distinguished and experienced lawyer of the Appellate Side Bar and asked him his advice as to the topics of law on which I could usefully specialise. For the M. A. examination in India, I had offered *Dharma Shastra*, *Smriti* texts, and *Purva Mimamsa* Philosophy and I knew, at that time, that it would be a good foundation for a deeper study of Hindu Law on later occasions. The lawyer I had consulted advised me to concentrate on the law of adoption, because, he said, adoptions were more frequent and generally took place in affluent families which could afford to raise difficult questions of law for judicial decisions. I followed his advice, partly because the subject of adoption had always fascinated me owing to its novel conception of introducing in the family circle a notional or substitute son in place of a real son, whom nature had not provided. I spent many years on the specialisation in this topic of law and I confess that my labour was not ill spent. In the course of my practice of 32 years, I had the fortune of appearing in most appeals where complicated questions relating to adoption were involved.

The subject also had its human side. For instance, a young widow of 16 adopted as her "son" under the Bombay Law a man of 40 years, with children. The relationship thus created, initially as mother and son, developed later, under the imperative forces of nature, into another softer relationship and, in many cases, I had to support adoptions objectionable on many domestic, social or moral grounds. Questions having public importance sometimes arose. For instance, what should happen to the children of the adopted son born before his adoption? Should the law retain them in their place in the family of their birth or should it transfer them, along with their father, into the family of adoption? Such delicate questions were of perennial interest and had their public aspect relating to the policy of the Hindu Law.

Appearing frequently in adoption cases, I discovered that an adoption brought peace or happiness to the adopting family only in very exceptional cases. The experiment of introducing a stranger into the most tender, sacred and intimate family relationship of a mother and son ended, in most cases, in total failure and the mercenary considerations, which often prompted an adoption as opposed to the religious solace

obtainable by the existence of a son to perform the *post-mortem* ceremonies of the dead father, became such a paramount feature of adoptions that courts were gradually induced to make a distinction between the two possible motives of an adoption, viz. the secular and the spiritual, and to hold that an adoption might be valid for one purpose and not valid for the other—a distinction which must have made the eminent lawgiver Manu turn in his grave.

One could cite many instances showing how the custom of adoption had proved a prolific source of litigation, like many other domestic relations of the Hindu community. I have often wondered, while appearing in appeals relating to disputes arising out of these relationships, what an interesting study it would be for the younger members of the profession, in the days of their unemployment, to watch the daily cause lists of the Bombay High Court and find out how many suits and appeals out of the entire list arose out of Hindu family quarrels. The proportion would be very high, if not 60 per cent. What a tremendous waste of Hindu riches and energy, I thought, was going on daily and yearly in these individual attempts to get redress against the iniquities and injustice of Hindu family life? I well remember, in this connexion, the observation of a shrewd lawyer, no longer living, that most of his fortune, which was fairly large, was made out of Hindu family quarrels and he added *sotto voce* that, as long as the Hindu woman's lot was what it had been for centuries and the uncertainty of the rules of Hindu law continued, lawyers need not have any fears regarding making a living.

There is a belief at the Bar, which is not altogether unfounded, that, in the life of a young advocate, comes a day when his opportunity to distinguish himself unexpectedly occurs. I say unexpectedly because, in most cases I know of, at the Indian and English Bar, such opportunities came when least expected. Young advocates have consequently to be always on the alert and seize the opportunity when it comes unexpectedly. In my case, this happened in a *cause celebre* which arose out of the disputes between the late B. G. Tilak and the Government of Bombay. Tilak had been concerned in an adoption, where the young widow of his friend adopted one son after another, leading to disputes, which at one stage reached the Bombay High Court. It is a well settled rule of Hindu Law that a second adoption cannot be legally made

while the first adoption stands valid. Consequently, the adoptions made by the lady one after another led to disputes. I happened to be engaged for the second son, who preferred an appeal to the Bombay High Court from an adverse decision of the trial court. As the case was of considerable importance, Lowndes (Later Sir George Lowndes, Law Member of the Viceroy's Council and subsequently my colleague on the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council) was engaged as my leader. At the last minute, when the case suddenly came up, Lowndes happened to be engaged elsewhere and, as the court refused even a short postponement on that ground, I had to conduct the appeal and ultimately won it after nearly a fortnight's hearing. Apart from the fact that the decision of the High Court was later reversed in appeal by the Privy Council, the case proved of great benefit to me. As the great Tilak had been concerned in the case as a trustee, accused of exercising undue influence over a young girl, the case had obtained disproportionately sensational importance and my success in the appeal in the High Court proved an important event in my career. In conducting the appeal I had however to exercise very great care to avoid making any unnecessary, personal or hostile attacks upon the great leader. While the appeal was being heard, Tilak was in jail under a conviction obtained at the instance of the Bombay Government and out of my great personal regard for him and also from a sense of fairness due to an absent accused, I observed this restraint, for which Tilak came and thanked me on his release from jail. I may add that this incident marked the beginning of an acquaintance with him which later grew into greater understanding and intimacy.

I shall end this chapter with stating that, while attending to my professional work which was light at this time, I carried on intensive literary activity. I read a paper before an important Association of literary men, embodying the results of my studies in *Dharmashastra* and *Smriti* texts. My paper gave a picture of the life of an ancient *Brahmachari* (religious student) and pointed out, in considerable detail, the rules of discipline which related to the life of such a student and also the various opportunities which brought him into contact with Nature. He went to reside in the house of his preceptor, who generally lived in an *Ashram* (hermitage) far remote from the busy haunts of men.

The preceptor generally kept with him a few students, sent by their parents to reside with him, of the ages of 8 to 9 years. These students finished in their families a ceremony called *Vratibandha* (literally tying up the boy with social and religious obligations), which ceremony was most significantly intended, according to the scheme of life popular in ancient India, to bring them into increasing participation in their duties as citizens or as members of social units. The boys then left home at the age mentioned above and repaired to the sylvan heritage of the preceptor. There they lived in close contact with him, receiving his personal attention during practically all the time they lived there. Excellent provision was made for their contact with Mother Nature by the imposition of a semi-religious obligation that they had to go out every morning into the forest and collect fuel (*Samidha*) for the daily sacrificial fire. In the afternoon, they received instruction from the preceptor. They lived on very pure and restricted diet, calculated to invigorate them but to keep their rising virility under control. Their studies were so arranged as to create a liking for intellectual pursuits and also formed a preparation for meeting their domestic, social and public obligations in later life. They lived with their preceptor generally for a period of twelve years, after which they returned home and took up their duties as cultured citizens. In my speech mentioned above, I pointed out how far it was possible to revive, in modern life, the ancient discipline. The speech was very well received and due publicity was given to it.

I also contributed Marathi articles to magazines on religious subjects. Simultaneously, I contributed, week after week, to a Marathi daily in Bombay, comments on the theatrical pieces then popular. During my study of the Sanskrit plays of great poets like Kalidas and Bhavabhuti, I had come to know the teachings of a semi-historical and semi-mythical personality called Bharata. The necessity of these teachings being adapted to modern times had to be brought to public notice. Most of my articles in the press related to the manner in which this transition from the old to the new, could be effected. These articles exposed the deficiencies of many popular authors and actors. Oftentimes, my comments were caustic, exposing the vanities and frailties of inflated mediocrity. I had, therefore, to keep my identity undisclosed and it remained so for

many years, until it was revealed about the year 1918 on the occasion of my presiding at the All-Maharashtra Dramatic Conference in Poona. On that occasion, I publicly stated my views about reforming the Marathi stage.

CHAPTER THREE

Early Legal Cases to Death of Grandfather (1905-1915)

DURING the period to which this chapter relates I was busy nursing my practice at the High Court of Bombay. Following British methods I joined in the year 1908 the Chamber of a British Senior Counsel. My main intention in doing so was to get acquainted with the work which went on from day to day at the High Court. My stay in London in Romer's Chamber mentioned in the previous chapter had made me familiar with the practice and procedure of British Courts. I had also done, during that time, a large number of "pleadings" and other matters relating to Chamber practice. I was thus ready to receive the fullest benefit of my experience in the Chambers of this Englishman in Bombay. He kept me busy and all his big cases I was able to study. Simultaneously I had to attend also to my own work which grew with unexpected rapidity.

I had several cases in which political matters came up for decision. Many of them were before British Judges. With my known political views, these matters perhaps gravitated to me in a measure which a junior of my standing had not much reason to expect. My earliest political case related to a charge of sedition on the ground that a demand for *Swarajya* was made in the offending writing. The hearing was before a British Civilian Judge, who had, some time previously, delivered a judgment interpreting the Sections relating to Sedition in the Indian Penal Code perhaps too liberally for the sentiments of his Civilian set. Ignoring at the hearing of this *Swarajya* case his views expressed in that decision, he argued that the very demand for *Swarajya* was seditious,

because, in effect, it meant the displacement of the British Government established by law. To seek to replace such a Government, he thought, was itself a form of sedition. The Sections of the Indian Penal Code dealing with the law of sedition he interpreted with such unreasonable strictness that the demand for Swarajya, however expressed, would fall within their purview. I tried to point out that the essence of the offence, as mentioned in the Penal Code, involved a criminal intention or violent methods advocated to induce the change of Government, which could not be predicated if the means suggested were legitimate or peaceful. I added that the demand for Swarajya was the natural and legitimate development of the promises made and assurances given, from time to time, by the British people through their accredited representatives including, e.g. Queen Victoria's Proclamation, and that, so long as the demand for freedom was peaceful and the means advocated were within the law, the demand was not objectionable. In support of my view I tried to refer to the Judge's previous decision, but unfortunately that decision had, in the meanwhile, made the Judge so unpopular with some members of the executive Government and with his friends in the Civil Service that he shied at the mere mention of the ruling and would not allow me even to refer to any passage in that decision.

"Oh," he said, "that decision was entirely on a different occasion and I do not propose to follow it here." I said, "My Lord, whether to follow it or not is a matter entirely in Your Lordship's discretion. But I cannot be prevented from referring to a decision which was publicly pronounced and had found a place in the official Law Reports." With great difficulty he was ultimately persuaded to listen to several parts of his previous judgment and, though I could not succeed in preventing a conviction, my argument ultimately had the effect of reducing the sentence.

Another case related to the use of the *Vandemataram* (hail mother) song. It was also before a British Judge. The Court below had convicted the accused for popularising the song. The feelings of the British Judge, though not a Civilian, were, on this occasion, more hostile than in the previous case. An official translation of the entire song had been put in evidence but the Judge picked out only the passages in which the Indian people were asked to throw off the foreign yoke. I

referred to Bankimchandra's novel, *Ananda Math*, where the song originally occurred and showed, by reference to many parts of the novel, that the reference was to the foreign yoke of Moghul rule and not to the British Power. But the call, he said, is made to the Indian public in general terms and is sure to influence the minds of impetuous youth. He completely ignored the beautiful description of Mother India occurring in the early part of the song. Ultimately, with great difficulty, I succeeded in obtaining, as in the previous case, not an acquittal but a reduction of sentence. Gradually however the filtration of political ideas could not be avoided even in the official world, with the result that similar political cases which came to me at later periods were heard with a better appreciation of the Indian viewpoint.

The cases, which were perhaps the most difficult to win were those in which upcountry lawyers were concerned in political activities, which, however mild and innocuous, attracted the hostile attention of the executive authorities of the districts. The collectors (chief executive authority) would take the least opportunity of hauling up pleaders, by misusing the provisions of an Act originally intended for controlling the professional misconduct of legal practitioners. These cases were, as I said above, particularly difficult to win when they were heard by British Judges, and the difficulty was worse when the British Judge happened to be a member of the Indian Civil Service, who had, in his early days, rubbed shoulders with the District Police and had formed hostile views about the demand for Swaraj. The difficulty was his usually firm belief in the veracity of the statements of the District Police with whom he had at one time fraternized. Some British Barrister Judges too had this faith in the veracity of the Police statements, drawn, in this case, from their experience of the British Police in England, whose behaviour and relations with the public were essentially different. In cases dealing with politically minded pleaders one was under the necessity of maintaining a strict and dignified attitude, refusing to be provoked by the remarks from the Bench, which, in an ordinary case, one could afford to resent. But the object in such cases being to obtain the offending pleader's acquittal, loss of temper, however justified on the advocate's part, was the sure means of inviting a conviction. I found, however, after conducting a number of such cases, that if one

persisted enough and kept one's temper unruffled, it was not always difficult to obtain an acquittal in the end.

During this period having occasionally some leisure on my hands, I kept a diary regularly recording my impressions from day to day of what I saw around me. I shall reproduce here only a few extracts from this diary which I think may prove of public interest even at this date. On one occasion, I wrote:

My thoughts are at present in a state of unrest. A general desire to be useful to my country is the only feeling which I can clearly discern out of a perplexing medley of Politics, Economics, Theosophy, Patriotism, Pessimism, Optimism and many other shades of thought. On the whole, I find that my few years in England have been most momentous. The difference between a nation that is free and has obtained that blessing as the outcome of a mighty effort sustained over centuries and another [India] that is just beginning to feel the faint throb of national unity—the difference between these two peoples, so great, so varied and so manifold, is dawning on my mind and restrains the hasty revolutionary tendencies of my younger days. But this change of feeling is also showing itself in a greater belief in the truth and reasonableness of our political demands. These demands have not always been earnestly and vigorously voiced and are often the outcome of half-hearted efforts continued with failing faith. I am convinced that if we examined more closely the individual lives of our leading men and tried to establish greater consistency between our political profession and our actions, the former would gain in force and intensity and the latter would be purer than they have been. As Lord Bryce once observed, "If you wish to cast the horoscope of a nation, follow its leaders across the threshold of their homes."

My diary continues:

It seems to me that the difference between England and India is nowhere so great as in politics and social matters. Taking the latter first, I am surprised at the wonderful correspondence which ultimately establishes itself between our thoughts and our actions. How indelible and faithful is the impress the one leaves on the other. A solitary genius, strong in its individuality, is perhaps able to prevent this inevitable correspondence between thought and action but the rest of us are but the slaves of that Law which makes the outward expression of our life conform to our undisclosed impulses and aspirations. A nation that is vigorous, fond of work, sturdy and keen, develops, in the course of ages, a social system, every feature of which reflects the habits of the community. The clean brass door plate, the call bell, the prim parlour-maid, Westminster Abbey, St. Thomas's Hospital,

Earl's Court Exhibition and Mollentrave on women—each seemingly so diverse and disconnected—they are yet all linked together as the expression of the general sturdiness of the community, its compactness, its love of method, dominant patriotism and a quiet desire for work and to make the best of life while it lasts. To transplant or imitate the social life of another people is an effort, the success of which is bound up with the cultivation of faculties, feelings and ambitions so different at present from our normal ones. The connection is so subtle and yet so true. It may seem unpatriotic to say all this but every phase of our life here in India wears the impress of a people that have long given up the sturdy individualism of their past. We are too communal in India, our notions of right and wrong, our very aesthetics are communal, our pleasure and pain are losing in freshness, breadth and intensity as they are rested on communal notions of social life, in which our main anxiety is for an insincere self-suppression. An honest attempt at such self-suppression may often be laudable and may raise us higher with every exercise of self-denial. Life, continued under such high impulses, would be divine and turn earth into heaven. But to secure this end, the impulse of self-suppression has to be a consciously directed force, working, like a chisel, to produce symmetry with every stroke consciously dealt. We however do nothing of the kind. In a joint family we follow an oppressive fetish of peace, harmony and good-will. Our sacrifices lose their value from their sullen and sometimes blind performance, and a system, which would otherwise be a perfection of self-surrender, often degenerates into the sullen confusion of a pandemonium.

While troubled by these thoughts, in the hot weather of 1905-06, living at my family country seat at Lonavla, I saw G. K. Gokhale who was living there at that time. My diary entry of 23 May reads as follows:

When I saw Gokhale in the morning, he made me a frank proposal about my joining him in his noble work of nation-building. Convinced that the forces at the disposal of Government are being co-ordinated and arranged by them for a desperate struggle, Gokhale is now thinking of starting, under his supervision and control, a Society called "The Servants' of India Society" whose badge will be complete self-surrender and whose endeavour will be directed towards the study of the historico-economic problems of India, with the obligation to carry on constitutional agitation as the only business of life. Poona is going to be the Headquarters and the work of the Society will be done with the same singleness of purpose as of the well-known Society of Jesus. Gokhale spoke very enthusiastically about his scheme. The veteran patriot was aglow. His face shone bright in the morning sun and while he walked about, in the impulse of his emotion, his easy and elastic steps

almost augured the future success of his scheme. He is an optimist. Pessimism he believes to be the privilege of those who have worked during their life but have found no success. Charlatans like us, he said, have no right to that phase of thought. His scheme is first to be tried in the Deccan and its fate there will determine the rise of such institutions in other parts of the country.

My diary entry continues:

He made me an earnest proposal to cooperate with his efforts. His work, he said, would, in course of time, fall on me and I would thus be rendering myself very useful to my country, without giving up my wishes in other directions. But the price required would be total renunciation of every other pursuit.

While listening to him I felt several times that I should make it possible to share such work but I knew my difficulties in my family and dared not give him false hope. So, when I saw him again the same afternoon I gave him a complete picture of my present situation and some idea of the difficulties which confronted me. He felt very disappointed and was so chilled and repressed in his enthusiasm that I could not help feeling remorse at my refusal to join him immediately. I pleaded for time to get over my family difficulties. On that he rightly observed, "My mind may change or I may not live long enough to receive you at a later date. Besides, ten years of your present age, are worth twenty a decade hence." I felt the force of his remark so well that I gave up contradicting him. My ambition to read books, he rightly said, was not so good as personal contact with the affairs of the country, a daily sharing of the hopes and fears which the country felt. He said he had heard of me a great deal and had thought of me as a possible co-worker and his first impressions on seeing me, which to him were often infallible guides, confirmed his preconceptions about me. My fluency of speech and steadfast industry would be well-employed. He mentioned many other qualities which he thought I possessed but I had to say a most cruel "No" to him. It was unavoidable. I knew my difficulties too well and I realised that it was silly to talk of joining him later.

My diary continues:

So I left him and on returning home had a serious talk with my mother. She is half-willing to agree and if the issue lay with her alone I feel that I should have no difficulty. I feel convinced that my present mental unrest would be calmed on complete absorption in selfless work. What appeared to me as unrefutable in Mr. Gokhale's remark was his opinion that to prove a useful patriot quiet study of books year after year was not so important as face to face study of the people

and of their wants. His proposed training therefore comprehends a wide travel over India with a study of agrarian and economic problems on the spot supplemented by theoretical study of books in the library at his headquarters in Poona, under his personal supervision and guidance. I wish it was possible to join him now but it cannot be immediately and it is foolish to look beyond the next few years. So I am giving up the idea for the present. I do not however want to lose touch with him and accordingly I wrote to him the following letter:

My dear Mr. Gokhale,

I am not sure whether it is proper to take more of your time in writing to you after all that has happened between us. But, indeed, I must not omit to thank you for the extreme kindness with which you treated me and the complete frankness you showed in speaking and listening to me. Since I left you, I have been thinking of the matter and have had a long and serious talk with my mother. I felt confirmed that what I spoke to you is the only proper thing I could do under present circumstances and I do hope that you might find it in your heart possible to sympathise with, if not to condone one, to whom the tears of his dearest relatives are more than the censure of the motherland. I feel tossed between what is right and what is wrong, I ask for your guidance. So moaned Arjuna centuries ago, unable to decide between conflicting duties. The riddle is still amongst us as of old, and the sphinx is as inexorable as ever in demanding its solution. I hope, however, that you will not completely give me up as a lost soul and deprive me of all touch with you and your noble work. I feel strongly that an eventful day in my life ended with this evening's twilight but I hope a brighter dawn will succeed the night that must intervene. I wish your scheme every success. Believe me,

Yours very sincerely
M. R. Jayakar

My critical faculties at that time were extremely awake and what I saw about me at the Bar was not very satisfactory and I expressed my sentiments in my diary on 20 June 1905 as follows:

Really the more I see of the Bar the more I feel that the one quality necessary for success is the calm dignity and unruffled self-possession which marks the Englishman. Side by side with it and in full contrast thereto, the obsequious fussiness of many Indian advocates becomes contemptibly obvious. It would be well for the Indian junior to cultivate the straight ways of the Englishman but their importance is so little recog-

nized and is so intimately connected with the constitution of our national temperament, that to look for their presence and development in the present-day Indian, is like watching for the break of dawn at midnight. I have not been at the Bar for long but I can say without hesitation that our shifty and faltering habits are a fruitful cause of the unreliability with which we are often regarded by the Bench.

In the year 1907 I had the opportunity of witnessing, in the City of Bombay, how, from insignificant incidents, a conflagration can arise if the atmosphere is sufficiently inflammable. It was the occasion described then as the "Battle of the Clocks" leading eventually to an infamous conspiracy then known in Bombay as the "Caucus".

Lord Curzon in his omnipotence decreed on 1 July 1905 that India should observe one uniform time, since known as Standard Time. Previous thereto there was no uniformity. Some places kept Madras or Railway time, others, like Bombay, had their own local time. When the change was ordered by the mighty ukase of the great proconsul, the Bombay Government and most public bodies loyally put their clocks 39 minutes in advance of the local time.

The Municipal Corporation of Bombay, on being asked for its views, expressed its willingness to adopt Standard Time for all Municipal purposes and the Government, thinking that there was a fairly large body of opinion in favour of the change, announced that from 1 January 1906, Standard Time would be the official time for all purposes. When, however, this decision was communicated to the Bombay Municipal Corporation, it was decided, on a motion of some of the opponents of this change, that Municipal clocks should not be altered by the Commissioner without the express order of the Corporation. At a later date, however, another Municipal Councillor favouring the change moved that all Municipal clocks should be set to Standard Time on and from the date of the passing of the Resolution. When this Resolution was adopted, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who by popular consent was regarded as the father of the Corporation by reason of his eminent services for well nigh forty years, was in the President's Chair and therefore unable to influence the vote in favour of Standard Time. When, however, at a later date he had vacated the President's Chair, he moved on 23 April 1906 that, in view of the serious inconvenience and hardship felt by the public, the Corporation were of opinion that

Bombay Time should be reverted to and that the Commissioner should be asked to set all Municipal clocks accordingly. The contest thus began and gathered force with every fresh move. A mass meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Bhalchandra Krishna, a popular physician and veteran Corporator, and a petition signed by over 15,000 citizens was addressed to the Government of Bombay showing the strength of public feeling against Standard Time. Pherozshah contended that it was neither fair nor reasonable that the Government of Bombay, though well aware that opinion was divided on the adoption of Standard Time, had not thought it fit to consult the Indian population and stated that he resented such arbitrary action. The following extract from his speech would indicate his point of view:

I frankly tell you—you might call it a matter of sentiment or of prejudice—that the one important argument which bears upon the subject is the integrity, the dignity and the independence of the City. It is neither fair nor proper that the population of the City should be driven like a flock of dumb cattle because the Chamber of Commerce and the Port Trust adopted Standard Time, regardless of the special circumstances of the City of Bombay. This is one of the things which has influenced me in coming again to enter a strong protest against an action of this character—a measure adopted by Government without consulting the feelings and sentiments of the people and without giving them an opportunity of expressing their opinion. Perhaps it is a matter of mere sentiment and prejudice but I shall always take pride in standing up for the integrity, the dignity and the independence of the immense population of the City of Bombay.

Pherozshah's proposal was opposed by, among others, a group of European officials led by Harrison, Accountant General. He observed that Pherozshah had attained a deserved ascendancy in the Corporation and it was a matter of deep disappointment that, in order to show that ascendancy, he had thought it fit to drag in the mire the reputation of the Corporation for consistency, sobriety and good sense.

The voting however was in the nature of a personal triumph for Pherozshah, who was able to carry the motion by 31 votes against 22, a result which was loudly cheered. But this success brought to a head the resolve which had been formed by a handful of hostile persons unmindful of the immense services of Pherozshah. They bitterly resented, as they said,

his dominance in civic affairs. As the *Bombay Times*, with European sympathies, observed, the issue had not been decided upon the merits of Standard Time. The decision had been taken for the maintenance of the prestige of Pherozeshah. The paper added that "in due course Sir Pherozeshah would find that he had sadly over-calculated his strength."

These words proved ominous, for, in July 1908, Harrison moved in the Municipal Corporation for the adoption of Standard Time by the Municipality, with a reservation in favour of two Municipal clocks which were to continue to be regulated by local time till otherwise ordered. Pherozeshah moved an amendment for adjourning the debate till the Governor-in-Council had dealt with a petition addressed to him by a public meeting, which had been held on 28 June, petitioning the Government to restore local time and thereby remove an unnecessary cause of irritation and discontent. Speaking at the public meeting, Pherozeshah stated that a very wrong time had been selected for this agitation when the country was seething with unrest. It was a time when sober, thoughtful and discreet men of all races and creeds and of all shades of opinion should put their heads together to promote peace and harmony. It was not the time for forcing a change on the people who did not want it and who were influenced more by sentiment and prejudice than by logic or historical arguments.

This powerful plea prevailed with the Corporation, and Pherozeshah's amendment was carried. Thus the trouble was temporarily at an end.

Two months later, however, after Pherozeshah had secured the rejection of Standard Time, a movement was started destined to convulse all Bombay, which threatened for a time seriously to impair that harmony between the different sections of her population which had always been the distinguishing characteristic of Bombay public life. A feeling was fostered assiduously in certain quarters that Pherozeshah's opposition was a personal attempt to show to the City who was master, to impose upon the Corporation his personal will in the face of its own opinion twice expressed. It was said that Pherozeshah was growing too intolerant and that his domination had reached a stage at which it could brook no opposition. "The despot must be overthrown and his following must be crushed," was the slogan of Harrison, the promoter

of the movement. He conceived the idea of ridding the city of Pherozeshah's domination and he set about looking for allies and easily found them owing to his position as the Accountant General of the Government of Bombay. They were the then editor of the *Times of India* who wielded a formidable pen and controlled a powerful newspaper, the Collector of Bombay and the Commissioner of Police, whose official positions enabled them to dominate the body of the Justices of the Peace, the electorate which was to be the instrument for achieving the designs of the organizers of the movement. With the assistance of these men, Harrison carried on an extensive campaign against Pherozeshah.

The general elections to the Corporation were to come off in February 1907. Pherozeshah was a candidate as usual for one of the 16 seats allotted to the body of the Justices of the Peace. There were about 600 of them and a large number depended upon the favour of some official or other, it was not therefore a difficult task to manipulate the electorate. One of the first things the organizers of the "caucus" did was to issue a "ticket" containing the names of 16 nominees of their choice, selected from the different communities, who were pledged to break down the "one-man rule" in the Corporation. They described themselves as "Independents".

Having formed his ticket, Harrison, backed by his allies, commenced operations on a large scale. Beginning with his own subordinates, he tackled successfully the various Departments of Government like the Secretariat and the Railways. Pressure and persuasion were freely employed to get all the justices, dependent on Government's favours, to vote solidly for the ticket.

As the election drew near, public excitement rose to fever heat. The caucus became the topic of conversation everywhere and a tremendous wave of feeling swept over Bombay and touched even distant parts of the country. With the exception of a few newspapers, the bitterest political opponents of Pherozeshah joined in denouncing this movement and in recognizing the immense debt which Bombay owed to him.

Voting day, 22 February, came at last. The public had been admitted to the Municipal Hall and the election took place amid scenes of wild excitement. The Municipal Commissioner was elected Chairman of the meeting. Just before the appointed hour, a large number of European Justices

trooped into the Hall with their voting papers containing the names of the Caucus already signed in their pockets. A large crowd inside the Hall and outside watched the course of events.

At the appointed hour, the Municipal Commissioner, the Chairman, declared the meeting closed. A tremendous ovation in favour of Pherozeshah followed, ignorant of what the voting would disclose. The result of the voting, however, showed that the Caucus had triumphed and Pherozeshah had lost.

The defeat of Pherozeshah at the Poll was however temporary. Two kind friends offered to make room for him. He accepted one offer and eventually came in. The election however was not allowed to pass unchallenged. A petition was filed in the Court of Small Causes in Bombay by some friends of Pherozeshah. Objections were raised to the validity of the election on certain grounds but the Chief Judge of that court upheld the election. A representation made to the Government by three non-official members of the Legislative Council, pointing out the gross impropriety of an interference of officials in the election, met with no better fate. The Government issued a curt reply that the Government resolution, which forbade interference with the free choice of candidates, related only to elections to the Legislative Council. These incidents kept the public mind in great excitement. They culminated in a great demonstration at the Hindu temple of Madhav Baug on the afternoon of 7 April. A mass meeting of the citizens of Bombay had been convened to give expression to the universal feeling of condemnation of the unconstitutional action of Government officials in interfering with the purity and freedom of the election and to adopt a Memorial to the Viceroy praying for an enquiry into the affair. Thousands of people of all communities flocked to the place. Gokhale came all the way from Calcutta to attend the meeting. A passage from Gokhale's speech on the occasion may be usefully quoted as it bears on the alleged autocracy of Pherozeshah Mehta:

A man with the great transcendental abilities of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, placing those abilities freely and unreservedly at the disposal of his City for nearly forty years, is bound to attain a position of unrivalled predominance in any Corporation and in any country. That such a man should tower head and shoulders above his fellow men

after such a record is only to be expected, and those who complain of this, are quarrelling with the very elements of our human nature. Such predominance implies deep gratitude on the part of those to whose service a great career has been consecrated and who reposed profound confidence in the wisdom and judgment of the leader, which goes with such gratitude. Sir Pherozeshah's position in the Bombay Corporation is no doubt without a parallel in India, but there is a close parallel to it in the mighty influence exercised by Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham and is not dissimilar to the position occupied by Lord Palmerston for many years in Whig England and later by the great Gladstone in the Councils of the Liberal Party.

The reply of the Government of India to the Memorial adopted at the meeting was as expected. The gist of their reply was that the officials who took part in the election had made no illegal use of their influence and consequently the Government of India had no orders to pass in connection with the prayers of the memorialists. With the holding of the Madhav Baug meeting however public excitement began to subside. The first meeting of the newly constituted Corporation passed off smoothly. The Caucus which had thought of reforming the Municipal administration and purging it of all traces of Pherozeshah's domination were unable to effectuate any change. Pherozeshah still remained dictator for all purposes and the Corporation continued to be dominated by his presence and led by his powerful intellect. It was obvious that the principles for which the Caucus had stood were that it was bad for the Corporation and bad for the City that the Municipality should for ever be controlled and dominated by a single personality or by a single set of individuals of the same ideas. But the coming in of the Caucus could not make any difference of principle in regard to Municipal administration which divided them from Sir Pherozeshah and his party. They could not deny the immense services Pherozeshah had rendered to the cause of Local Self-Government and the Bombay newspapers which had striven so hard to bring about his downfall suddenly changed ground and declared, soon after the election, that Pherozeshah remained then, as he had been for years, the ablest non-European not only in Bombay but probably in all India and that the movement which had culminated in his defeat had never for a moment been intended to exclude him from civic affairs, to which his great experience would always be of the utmost value. The motives

of the Caucus had always appeared clearly to the public of Bombay. Thus the Caucus had failed in depriving Pherozezshah of his exalted position in Bombay's public life.

The last stages of this affair can be briefly described. The matter ultimately reached the High Court of Bombay in the form of a suit filed by a well-known Solicitor of Bombay, Bhaishankar Nanabhai, against the Municipal Corporation of Bombay and its Commissioner to obtain a declaration that the general election of Municipal Councillors by the Body of the Justices of Peace on 21 January 1907 was invalid and to have it set aside and for interlocutory relief. The defendants representing the Caucus contended, *inter alia*, that the Court had no jurisdiction to try the suit. The suit was heard before a special Bench constituted under the rules of the High Court consisting of Sir Lawrence Jenkins, Chief Justice, and Mr. Justice Batty. Nearly every prominent Counsel of the Bombay Bar appeared in the suit, the Indians for the Plaintiff or parties supporting him and the British members of the Bar for the Municipal Corporation and its Commissioner. The eminence of the Bench, the political significance of the dispute, as also the appearance of eminent counsel gave the suit a disproportionately distinctive appearance, although its legal importance was limited, as the question involved related merely to the construction of certain Sections of the Bombay Municipal Act by no means difficult of interpretation. Notwithstanding, however, the simple nature of the dispute, the hearing continued for four days and ultimately the Chief Justice in a short judgement upheld the defendants' plea that the Court had no jurisdiction and dismissed the suit.

While in England I had the opportunity of frequently meeting Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India—a gracious guide to Indian students. From contact with him I developed an earnest desire to study and participate in the political movement which had then been centralized in the activities of the Indian National Congress. So, on my return to India I desired to take the earliest opportunity of studying the movement. It represented the founders of the Indian National Congress who had taken it from one stage of usefulness to another, under the lead of persons like Pherozezshah Mehta and others. This had gone on peacefully for many years till the advent of Lord Curzon as Viceroy of India set free certain forces which ultimately led, as described below,

to a division in the ranks of Indian political workers.

Lord Curzon came to India with many problems in his pocket and set about his task with a fearful energy. One of the writers of those times thus describes Lord Curzon and his Indian regime:

In a fateful hour, the brilliant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whose smartness was wont to delight the House of Commons, was sent out to succeed a mediocre and weak-kneed statesman. A singularly gifted man, he suffered from an exaggerated notion of himself and his mission in life. Oxford was but a setting for one magical figure, Parliament the stage for one inimitable actor, India the background of one radiant form in purple and gold. He came full of a lofty purpose, his imagination fired at the idea of ruling three hundred millions of Orientals. He set about his task with great energy. His appetite grew and his problems multiplied, India, official and non-official, looked on, amazed and stupefied.

The culminating act of Curzon's restless one-man rule was reached in the ill-starred partition of Bengal—"the biggest blunder since the battle of Plassey." The measure professed to be in the interests of efficient administration but the Bengali people regarded it as striking at the root of their growing solidarity of feeling and as calculated to overthrow the dominating political influence of the Bengali-speaking people. Never was there such an agitation as followed this decision. This unfortunate product of a misguided policy grew in strength and volume until Royal sympathy and British statesmanship came to the rescue, and the settled fact, the partition, was unsettled.

On the political feeling in India it had a tremendous effect. A deep feeling of discontent and resentment grew rapidly among the more ardent spirits, the Radicals in the national movement, who increasingly regarded as utterly futile all political agitation along the lines pursued by the old Congress leaders. The resolutions of the Congress had been from time to time treated with contempt by the Government and set aside as the demands of a few educated agitators or impatient idealists. Gradually the strength of this new party grew and they described the policy of the Moderates as "a policy of mendicancy". The mistakes of the Indian Government one after another helped to develop the strength of this new party, which was initiated and maintained by some vigorous leaders

of those times, especially in the Deccan and Bengal, which became the two principal centres of the new gospel.

The first manifestations of this new spirit, so far as it affected the Congress movement, were seen at the Banaras session of the Congress in December 1905. It was at Banaras that the boycott of English goods which had been started in Bengal as a protest against the partition of the Province, was declared to be "legitimate", not however without opposition from the Liberal Party who thought that such a step might ultimately end in hostility to the British Government. The new movement, started in 1905, reached a second stage at Calcutta, where there was a stormy session, and an open rupture was averted only by the tact and sagacity of Dadabhai Naoroji, who had come from England to preside at the Congress session. By that time, the new party, which made no secret of its contempt of the Moderates, had sketched out a comprehensive policy of "Passive Resistance" modelled on the *Sinn Fein* movement of the Irish Nationalists. My first contact with the Congress was at the Calcutta session to which I had been drawn principally by the fact that Dadabhai Naoroji, whom I had learned deeply to respect in England, was presiding. It was a happy inspiration of those who were in charge of that session to invite him to preside, persuading him to give up his voluntary exile in England. I then had my first opportunity of observing from close quarters the Congress leaders of those times, with some of whom my contact increased later. I then saw Aurobindo Ghosh and his associates. What struck me, were his great earnestness and dignified appearance. He had not then developed, so far as outside appearance could show, into a complete yogi, but I got, from a distance, an indication that his political philosophy was different from that of those who surrounded him.

At the Calcutta Congress the fight centred round the resolution relating to "boycott" and, in spite of the opposition of the older leaders, resolutions were passed, in a spirit of compromise, on Self-Government, Swadeshi and National Education. The Moderate wing under the leadership of Pherozeshah Mehta fought hard to prevent the good work of Congress from being discredited by a boycott resolution, which would indicate, as they thought, a spirit of vengeance and defiance. However, all that the Moderate leaders could do in the end was to whittle down the Resolution, so that it

appeared as a measure, not indicating the normal attitude of the Congress towards the Government, but as a form of protest specially justified by the partition of Bengal.

The disputes at the Calcutta session, which ultimately ended without an open rupture between the two parties, disturbed however the relations between the two parties to the straining point, with the result that the struggle reached a still more menacing stage when the Congress met at Surat next year, in the December of 1907. That session was originally intended to be held at Nagpur, but local differences were accentuated by the political condition in Bengal and ultimately the All-India Congress Committee, whose duty it was to make arrangements for the holding of the Congress session in emergencies, resolved that the session of 1907 should be at Surat. The good people of Surat, notwithstanding the short notice, had made magnificent arrangements for the holding of the Congress in their city. The grounds on the banks of the Tapti, called French territory, were secured and a temporary city was brought into existence with all the conveniences that could be demanded of it. Over 1,400 delegates assembled. This was the second session of the Congress which I had the opportunity of attending in the company of some friends. I moved freely among the delegates in both the Camps, gathering impressions of what was then regarded as the main political movement of the country. I could discover from my talks that, so far as appearances went, there was much to justify the hope that the session would be a successful one and would pass off without a hitch, though signs were not wanting of the coming rupture.

The first ostensible point of difference was the Presidentship of the Congress. It was urged that Lala Lajpatrai, the Lion of the Punjab as he was then called, who had just then come out of his incarceration, should be elected President. But that great patriot was unwilling that anything connected with him should mar the successful session of the Congress, and, with characteristic modesty, he declined to be a party to any agitation which had as its object his election as President.

This subject of controversy being thus out of the way, the disagreement shifted to what had by that time come to be known as the four Calcutta resolutions, viz. Boycott, Swadeshi, Self-Government and National Education. Although there was no such statement from any responsible quarter, apprehension

existed amongst the members of the new party that these four resolutions would be dropped from the Agenda to be put up before the Subjects Committee at Surat. The unfortunate delay by Gokhale in drafting resolutions on these points fed the suspicion and though the delay was later explained by him as due to other causes than a desire to interfere with these resolutions, the feeling of suspicion grew and all attempts to satisfy the new party by solemn assurances were of no avail.

The Congress met on 26 December 1907. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Tribhuvandas Malvi, a resident of Surat and a very respected Solicitor of Bombay. He delivered his address welcoming the Delegates and Ambalal Sakarlal, an esteemed Chief Justice of Baroda, proposed Rashbihari Ghosh, the eminent lawyer of Bengal, to the Presidential Chair. There were strong cries of protest from the new party. Ambalal however finished his speech and then Surendranath Bannerji, one of the doyens of the Congress, whose mid-Victorian orations we younger men loved to hear, was called upon to second the proposition, but even before his first sentence was over, a most determined effort was made by the delegates of the new party to prevent his speaking. They made such an uproar that Surendranath was unable to proceed and though he tried his best with his powerful voice to get a hearing, the tumult grew so much that the Chairman, Malvi, had no alternative than to suspend the meeting for the day. I was in the midst of many young men and we regretted, apart from the postponement of the Congress, that we had lost the opportunity of hearing perhaps the finest speaker of the times, Surendranath Bannerji. There was a general feeling of disapproval of the unseemly termination of the day's proceedings. It was however believed that all the delegates would meet the next day in a better frame of mind and the Conference broke up determined to continue the session the next day as if nothing had happened.

The Congress met again the next day, the 27th of December, and the proceedings were sought to be resumed from the point where they had been left off on the previous day. All my young friends who had attended this session were on tip-toe with expectation as to what was in store for us. It would be permissible, I think, to mention some details, for one thing because of the great importance of this session, which marked a definite split between the two parties of political leaders,

and which remained unhealed for many years afterwards, notwithstanding the efforts of some younger men, of whom I was one. But this part of the story will be told in its proper place in the narrative which follows.

Another reason for mentioning the details is that for a long time after this unfortunate incident, a tearing controversy raged as to who was really responsible for the break up of the Congress, whether the impatience and intrigues of Tilak and his party or the obduracy and superciliousness of Pherozeshah and his Moderate friends.

The Congress met again at 1 p.m. on the 27th, due notice of the meeting having been sent round. As the President-elect, Rashbihari Ghosh, was being escorted in procession through the Hall to the platform, a small slip of paper written in pencil bearing Tilak's signature was put by a volunteer into the hands of Malvi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The note read as follows:

Sir,

I wish to address the delegates on the proposal of the election of the President after it is seconded. I wish to move an adjournment with a constructive proposal. Please announce me.

Yours sincerely,

B. G. Tilak,

Deccan Delegate (Poona)

The Chairman, Malvi, read this note hurriedly and put it into his pocket. Apparently he thought in his hurry that it was a motion for adjournment which at that stage would be out of order. He therefore took no notice of this note, and sent no reply to Tilak. The proceedings were then resumed at the point at which they had been interrupted the previous day and Surendranath Bannerji concluded his speech seconding the motion for the election of the President interrupted on the previous day. Pandit Motilal Nehru of Allahabad, on a call from the Chairman, supported the motion. At this stage, the Chairman made no reference to Tilak's note, although it related to a proposal after the motion for the election of the President had been seconded. He ignored the note, taking it to be out of order. We, on our side of the pandal, thought this behaviour rather surprising, having regard to Tilak's status in public life and his services to the country. The

Chairman declared the motion for election carried and Rashbihari Ghosh was installed in the Chair amidst prolonged applause.

While the applause was going on and the President, Rashbihari Ghosh, rose to begin his address, Tilak came upon the platform and stood in front of the President. He urged that as he had given a notice of an amendment to the Presidential election, he should be permitted to move it. Thereupon, it was pointed out to him by the Chairman of the Reception Committee that his notice was not for an amendment to the Presidential election but for an adjournment of the Congress session. Such notice was, the Chairman thought, irregular and out of order at that stage and, the President having been duly installed in the Chair, no amendment about his election could be moved. This view of the Chairman of the Reception Committee, we younger men thought, ignored the words in Tilak's letter that he wished to address the delegates on the proposal of the election of the President after such proposal was completed by a seconder, but before it was put to the vote. It was at this stage and before the motion was put to the vote that Tilak desired to intervene and place his views before the delegates. Tilak then turned to the President and began arguing with him. President Ghosh stated how matters stood and ruled that Tilak's request to move an amendment about the election could not then be entertained. Tilak thereupon protested "I will not submit to this. I will now appeal from the President to the delegates." In the meanwhile, an uproar had already commenced and the President who tried to read his Address could not be heard. Tilak with his back to the President kept shouting that he insisted on having his say and that he would not allow the proceedings to go on. The President repeatedly appealed to him to be satisfied with his protest and to resume his seat. Tilak kept on shouting that he would not go back to his seat unless he was bodily removed. The persistent defiance of the authority of the Chair provoked a hostile demonstration against Tilak and all attempts on the President's part, either to proceed with the reading of his address or to persuade Tilak to resume his seat after lodging his protest failed. This unseemly altercation going on on the platform was a most distressing spectacle, and we, on our side of the pandal, thought that Tilak should have resumed his seat after lodging a strong



My wife SUSHILABAI



My children KOU MIDI, JAYAPAL MORARAI and NALINI

protest and that, if he had done so, he would have retained the esteem of all his supporters and even his opponents and his cause would have advanced one step further. The words of his letter were clear and many persons in the audience felt that the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the President had both misconstrued its terms.

For a few days previous to this session, the air was full of rumours that Tilak's party had come in large numbers desiring to wreck the Congress. It was not unlikely that, influenced by these rumours, Malvi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, completely ignored Tilak's letter at the stage to which his request related. If the Chairman did so with a view to denying Tilak the opportunity, which the Chairman thought would be used by Tilak for creating a disturbance, then the commotion which followed Tilak's exclusion led to a worse disturbance than Tilak could have created by a formal speech from the platform. From all that I saw from my seat close to the platform, I thought that it was a tactless exercise of his power by Malvi and that the fate of this session would have perhaps been different if Tilak had been treated with the consideration he was entitled to. However, the fateful step was taken, which altered the course of events for perhaps two generations.

The official Congress report states that at this stage a shoe was hurled from the body of the Hall which struck both Pherozeshah Mehta and Surendranath Bannerji who were seated side by side. Tilak stood in front of them. It was a most unfortunate occurrence. Nobody could say where the shoe came from or by whom it was thrown. Enraged by Tilak's behaviour, many delegates thought, especially as the shoe was a Poona Brahmin shoe, that it was thrown by a Poona follower of Tilak. But I met more than one person who vouched on their word of honour that they saw the shoe hurled by a Poona follower of Gokhale. The view however current in Congress circles was that a follower of Tilak was responsible for this occurrence. Even the esteemed British journalist, Mr. Nevinson, who was present throughout the proceedings as an interested spectator wrote as follows:

Suddenly something flew through the air. "A shoe—A Mahratta Shoe"—reddish leather, pointed toe, sole studded with lead. It struck Surendranath Bannerji on the cheek; it cannoned off upon Pherozeshah

Mehta. It flew, it fell, and, as at a given signal, white waves of turbaned men surged up the escarpment of the platform. Leaping, climbing, hissing the breath of fury, brandishing long sticks, they came striking at any head that looked to them Moderate, and in another moment, between brown legs standing upon the green baize table, I caught glimpses of the Indian National Congress dissolving in chaos.

The mortification which Nevinson expresses in these vivid terms was felt by us all and we thought that the political clock of the country had been put back a generation or two. The wonder however was that though all this happened so suddenly, it could have been so easily avoided by a little tact and forbearance on both sides. The heavens would not have fallen if Tilak had been permitted to make his speech appealing to the delegates, nor if Tilak, in his turn, had resumed his seat after lodging a powerful protest supported by the words of his letter, pointing out the Chairman's injustice in misinterpreting them.

With regard to the question as to who was more likely to hurl the shoe, whether a follower of Tilak or of the Moderates, there were one or two circumstances mentioned later in the official report of the Congress, which we, on our side of the pandal, considered very suggestive: for instance, *first*, that Mr. Tilak stood, at that time at the front of the dais, defiantly braving the audience and the Moderate delegates were seated behind him; it was easier therefore, to aim the shoe at him rather than at the Moderate leaders sheltered behind him. *Secondly* at the stage at which the shoe was hurled, the last provocation was given by Tilak defiantly refusing to resume his seat and causing a disturbance in the audience; Tilak was therefore more likely to be the object of a general resentment in the audience rather than Pherozezshah Mehta or Surendranath Bannerji who were seated behind on the platform.

But the unfortunate circumstance, which practically settled the issue against Tilak's party in the mind of the audience, was that the hurling of the shoe was immediately followed, as Nevinson records, by Tilak's followers brandishing long sticks, rushing to the platform and striking at the heads of the Moderates. Another circumstance, which came to light at the end of the scuffle, was that, as against the scores of Moderates injured in the melee, hardly any follower of Tilak was seriously hurt. These facts weighed the scales heavily against Tilak's party, and the general opinion of the audience

went against them.

After the shoe had been hurled, the disorder increased and the President had no other course open to him but to declare that the session of the Congress was suspended *sine die*. Upon this announcement, the disorder grew wilder and the Police eventually came in and cleared the Hall. This is the sorry story of the incident which I witnessed with extreme unhappiness. My impressions, independently formed at this time, have been faithfully recorded in a letter which I wrote to my grandfather in Bombay from the Surat Congress Camp, as follows:

Tent No. 10
Congress Camp, Surat

My dear Grandfather,

I am only writing a line to say that I am all right and was an eye-witness to today's unfortunate proceedings. Don't form your judgement from what you hear or read in the papers. There is much to be said on either side, and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta's side has shown extreme tactlessness, just as the Extremists have been guilty of grossly rowdy temper. I shall tell you the whole matter when I am back. At present I am taking in my impressions very rapidly and, thank God, I see enough folly in either party to keep myself in an independent position. I see enough of both sides here and gather my facts. I shall very likely leave here tomorrow night and be in Bombay on Sunday morning. I am comfortably lodged and fed. Don't be anxious.

Yours etc.
Mukund

It is a great pity that the President, Rashbihari Ghosh was not allowed to read his speech. If he had read it out Tilak's followers would have discovered that even the persons whom they condemned as Moderates evinced a new spirit in their endeavour to advance to the point of view which Tilak and his followers were anxious to secure. To show this I shall quote a few extracts from Rashbihari Ghosh's speech proposed to be delivered at Surat:

We all recognise the supreme need of unity and of patriotic sacrifice. We are all agreed that Nations are made by themselves. We are all agreed on the necessity of education on national lines and the general elevation of the masses so essential to the attainment of a higher political life. We are all agreed on the necessity of industrial deve-

lopment. For even deeper than political reform, before mere forms of Government, lies the great question of the industrial regeneration of the country. Let us stand by the Swadeshi movement which is founded not on hatred but on love, love for our own country, not hatred of the foreigners. Our creed is short and consists in the development of India for ourselves; but Swadeshi within the limits of the law is a patriotic sentiment which involves no disloyalty. We are determined not to use foreign goods so far as practicable, and no amount of repression will deter us from carrying out our resolution. We cannot protect our industries by tariff legislation, but we can show our love for the country by our sympathies for the masses who are now steeped in unspeakable poverty. The Anglo-Indian community however have taken fright at this movement and the Government too have been infected by it. They draw a sharp distinction between Swadeshi and boycott; but unless boycott is accompanied by violence, is there any real difference between the two?

It is clear from this extract that even the unbending Moderates were gradually approximating to the resolution passed at Calcutta, namely Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education and Self-Government. There is no doubt that if the speech had been allowed to be read at Surat, it would have offered a common ground on which both the Moderates and the Extremists could have stood together to evolve a common programme of work for the entire country.

The speech would have also shown the danger of immediately adopting methods for which the country was not then prepared and which took a long time to develop when Gandhi was able to launch these methods on the political seas, about the ultimate results of which methods, even under his direction, it is possible to have different views. The fact is extraordinary that even in the year 1907 Rashbihari Ghosh was able to picture in fair detail the gospel which came to be the political creed of India under the Gandhi regime. From this it seems clear that even in those early times, the air was full of the ideas which received later a definite form in Gandhi's hands.

Upon the dispersal of the Congress under the circumstances mentioned above, the leaders of the Congress felt that the differences which had made themselves so unpleasantly manifest on the 26th and 27th were fundamental in character and related to the principles that should dominate the Congress movement thereafter, and that the time had come when there

should be an explicit and unmistakable restatement of the basis on which Congress work was to be carried on. The question was, according to them, whether the principles on which the Congress had till then been working should continue to be the principles on which the Congress should work thereafter or whether, in view of the political tension in the country and of the fact that the representations of the people had not met with that consideration and response from the Government which they deserved, the attitude of the Congress should be one of absolute aloofness or dissociation from the Government and whether the object to be attained in the end by the Congress should be absolute independence. These veterans of the Congress strongly felt that the best interests of the country imperatively demanded that the attitude of the Congress should not be one of irreconcilable hostility to the British Government, nor of inconsistency with its continuance but that it should be one of well-informed, courageous and reasoned criticism of British administration and of response to the good measures which the Government might initiate. A crisis had been reached, they thought, in the history of the Congress and it had become necessary that the basic principles on which the Congress should continue its propaganda, the ideals that should inspire it, the object for which it should strive and the methods by which it should seek to achieve its purpose should be clearly and explicitly formulated and laid down. Guided by these thoughts, the veteran leaders of the Congress called a "Convention" of the delegates who had come to attend the Surat Congress, insisting however that those who were to take part in the convention should signify, by a solemn declaration in writing, their acceptance of the propositions stated below:

(1) that the attainment by India of Self-Government, similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Commonwealth, and participation by her in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members, is the goal of our political aspirations,

(2) that the advance towards this goal is to be by strictly constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit and improving the condition of the masses of the people,

(3) that all meetings, held for the promotion of the aims and objects above indicated, have to be conducted in an orderly manner with due

submission to the authority of those that are entrusted with the power to control their procedure.

This declaration of principles was signed by the following veteran leaders: Rashbihari Ghosh, Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendranath Bannerji, G. K. Gokhale, D. E. Wacha, Narendranath Sen, Ambalal Sakarlal Desai, V. Krishnaswami Iyer, Tribhovandas N. Malvi, and Madan Mohan Malaviya.

The Convention met and authorised a Committee consisting of about a hundred delegates to draw up a Constitution on the lines laid down in the declaration. The Committee duly met at Allahabad on 18 and 19 April 1908 and, after a full and prolonged discussion, adopted a Constitution. Articles 1 and 2 thereof mention the objects of the Congress as stated in the principles mentioned above.

The question of a Constitution for the Congress had been before that body and the country for a long time, since its session at Madras in 1887, and it formed at one time a chief subject of difference between Punjab Congressmen and the rest of the country, particularly Bengal. The disruption at Surat cannot therefore be said to have been an unmixed evil, as it precipitated the settlement of the question of a workable Constitution which had been postponed from time to time. The Constitution as settled at Allahabad was published by the end of July 1908. The Congress had to be held in December 1908. It was thought necessary that an early effort should be made to give the Constitution a fair trial and, with this view, the Congress met at Madras on 28 December 1908. The unfortunate feature of this meeting however was that Rashbihari Ghosh's address, unlike his previous address intended for Surat, contained needlessly strong comments upon the new (Tilak) party. As a specimen may be quoted the following short paragraph, but sentiments like those contained in it were scattered all over the address and many of us regretted that a person who had made such a powerful plea for unity at Surat should have been persuaded to strike a strongly discordant note in his address at Madras.

Now, I will not wander into the boundless realm of what might have been, but would only say this: Those who have gone out of us, were never of us, for if they had been of us they would have no doubt continued with us. Our paths now lie wide apart, and a yawning gulf separates us. It is however permissible to us to hope that these

wayward wanderers, if I may say so without offence, will come back to us and be ours again, joining hands and hearts with us and fighting under the old banner—that banner to which we have always been true—and by which we have again solemnly pledged ourselves to the Constitution never again to part. But we will not, we cannot, we dare not extend the hand of fellowship to them so long as they persist in their policy.

The new political party was, however, overwhelmed with a feeling that a cardinal blunder had been committed at Surat. It gradually realized that in wrecking the Congress at Surat, it had lost a powerful weapon for the furtherance of its political purposes, and it was, therefore, anxious to repair the mistake. Attempts at rapprochement were made at several Provincial Conferences but the "Moderates" did not agree. The more discerning among their leaders like Pherozeshah Mehta realised the utter incompatibility of temperament and desired a complete divorce. Among others the Bengal Congressmen were extremely anxious that the rift should be healed and accordingly the Bengal leader, Bhupendranath Basu, wrote a letter to Pherozeshah Mehta to which Pherozeshah's reply was a typically crushing one. A brief extract therefrom is quoted below:

It is no use shutting one's eyes to the fact within our knowledge (I can speak with authority as regards the so-called Extremists' Leaders in the Bombay Presidency) that some secretly cherished the idea of using the Congress for aims and methods not altogether constitutional. It is impossible, therefore, to let any doubt exist as to the character of the Congress organisation and movement. I cannot help saying that there is a great deal of mawkish sentimentality in the passionate appeals for union at all costs.... For God's sake, let us have done with all inane and slobbery whines about unity where there is really none.

But notwithstanding this strong expression of views, Bengal continued to urge the plea of a re-union.

The Anglo-Indian world however was extremely happy at the continuance of this disunion and Bombay dailies like the *Bombay Gazette* and *The Times of India* went on writing that the Congress was doomed as a representative institution, and the sooner the true and honest "Moderates" washed their hands off it the better, that courage in Indian politics was rare, and surgical operations were always painful: but they

were convinced that the Congress would gain in power and influence if it had the courage to amputate the accretion, viz. the Extremists.

While this was happening in the Anglo-Indian world in India, the feeling in England amongst the Liberals was expressed by their leader, Lord Morley. I quote a short extract from his *Recollections*.

The news has just come in that the Congress, so far from being "flat", as I had expected, has gone to pieces, which is the exact opposite of "flat", no doubt. For it means, I suppose, the victory of Extremists over Moderates, going no further at this stage than the break up of the Congress, but pointing to a future stage in which the Congress will have become an Extremist organisation.

The struggle was not however at an end and there were many in the camp of the Moderates who were anxious to close up the ranks and wanted a united Congress. The next session was to be held at Lahore and it was expected that a concerted opposition would be offered there to the newly framed Constitution. Partly to have a strong President at that session and partly to placate Pherozeshah Mehta, it was proposed by the leaders of both the sections that Pherozeshah Mehta should be the President of the Lahore session of a united Congress. While matters were in this state just a fortnight before the date of the session, Harkisanlal, Chairman of the Reception Committee at Lahore, received the following telegram from Pherozeshah Mehta:

I deeply regret that owing to a combination of unexpected circumstances I am compelled to relinquish the honour.

He gave no reasons for his refusal, and declined to explain his behaviour, but conjectures were offered and among them the Bombay Correspondent of the *Capital* of Calcutta declared that "the Extremists would have turned the Congress at Lahore into a pandemonium if Sir Pherozeshah had pronounced *ex cathedra* the views he had expressed in his famous letter, and it was to save the country an unseemly exhibition at a time when the reformed Councils have ushered in a new era which called for co-operation and good-will that the great patriot had declined to go to Lahore." Whatever the reasons, there was general regret at an action which dealt what then

appeared to be a shattering blow to the Congress cause. Madan Mohan Malaviya however, with his habitual gallantry, stepped into the breach and responded cheerfully to the call in spite of indifferent health. A chilling atmosphere however pervaded at Lahore and damped the ardour of those who had gathered to voice the Nation's demand.

After this split, each party started holding meetings and Conferences separately, but the desire to come together, on mutually respectful terms, continued to be cherished by many persons on both sides. We younger men, taking an increasing part in political life, were particularly anxious that the gulf should be bridged. While Pherozeshah was alive, we realised that this was impossible, for whatever his faults of temper, the clarity of his political vision was exemplary. After his death, however, his mantle fell, by common consent, upon his disciple and colleague Dinshaw Wacha. In the Moderate camp, there were a few persons who, owing to their intimate contact with younger men, partially shared this desire for a rapprochement. Chimanlal Setalwad was one of them. Temperamentally he was differently constituted and, at the High Court, he came into daily and intimate contact with us younger men. Jinnah occupied an intermediate position. In close contact with Pherozeshah and an occasional visitor to his legal Chambers, opposite the Bombay University Gardens, Jinnah made himself very useful in this matter. The legal chambers of Pherozeshah were, in those times, a great institution, which Pherozeshah, by his hospitality and personal attraction, had converted into a meeting place (his critics called it a Darbar) of political friends. I have gone there at his invitation on some occasions and had experience of his great qualities of winning over young men. In my time, he was one of the few senior leaders who had the gift of picking out younger men who they thought would be useful in promoting political work. In this excellent feature, he resembled three other great leaders of my time: Mahadeo Govind Ranade (we fondly called him by the first two names), and Tilak—and later Gandhi. These four leaders exercised an admirable hypnotism over younger men, whom they selected for increasing contact for their usefulness in the political field.

My contact with Jinnah had been increasing during this time and we had many political talks between ourselves and occasionally with Chimanlal Setalwad. On one or two

occasions, in the Chambers of Pherozeshah Mehta, the subject of a rapprochement had been touched upon, but that masterful leader, with an imperious wave of his hand, scotched the proposal. It did not appear to be with him a case of personal affront as some people thought, but the result of a deep conviction that the cause of the country would be better promoted by each party isolating itself from the political activities of its rivals. But with Chimanlal Setalwad it was a different matter.

In the course of our talks, it was suggested on one occasion by both Chimanlal and Jinnah that I should visit Wacha at his residence in their company. I had never met Wacha before, but my admiration for his patriotism, courage, experience and knowledge was great. I, therefore, readily consented to accompany Chimanlal and Jinnah one evening to Wacha's residence. I was then one of the leading younger men in politics and I thought that it would be a great service if I, as a representative of the feelings of younger men, could persuade Wacha to agree to a re-union. So, one evening, after the Courts had risen, we three went to Wacha's residence on Waudby Road. I shall describe in the words in my diary what happened.

We entered his residence, Chimanlal and Jinnah either forgot or deliberately omitted to introduce me. After the preliminary formalities were over, Wacha turned to me with an angry look and asked, "Who are you? Why have you come without invitation?" I replied, "I have come here at the request of my two friends and I thought that, as representing the feelings of younger politicians, I would venture to place before you certain considerations pointing to the desirability of the two parties coming together to promote political work. That is my excuse for being here without an invitation." He immediately lost his temper, became livid with rage and asked me to leave his house. The scene was so sudden and painful that Chimanlal and Jinnah were both stunned and said nothing. They looked at me helplessly and made a gesture that I should not retort. Wacha took me to his door, which he opened and I walked out. The door was then closed behind me. Chimanlal and Jinnah stayed behind.

This was a terrible experience and, the next morning, when we met at the High Court, it was quite evident that neither Chimanlal nor Jinnah had been prepared for this incident and deeply regretted it. A few days later, N. M. Samarth,

a friend of Wacha and a well-known Liberal leader, and advocate at the High Court, who knew me well, came and stated that Wacha did not know that I was the grandson of a very respected and eminent person in Bombay, which fact both Chimanlal Setalwad and Jinnah had omitted to mention to Wacha by their failure to introduce me. But, Samarth added, when he had explained to Wacha who I was and the nature of my political activities, Wacha felt sorry and desired to meet me again. It was enough, I replied to Samarth, that I had gone there to voice the sentiments of the younger generation of political workers and I added that this fact alone should have been sufficient to secure, from such a great public leader like Wacha, at least a polite reception. It was unnecessary for him to know, I added, how I was socially connected. I regretted therefore that I was unable to see Wacha again. The matter stopped there. Thus ended, at least for the time, my effort to bring the two parties together and they drifted more and more apart.

This period of ten years was full of intense public activity in Bombay. Other important events which took place during this period, can be grouped under the following headings:

(1) Public trials of well-known political leaders which I attended or in which I was professionally concerned.

(2) The establishment of public institutions in which were centred the social, political, literary and artistic activities of Bombay and in which I had the opportunity of closely participating.

(3) My own contributions to the literary, legal, professional and other public activities of Bombay.

(4) Public events which affected the future history of Bombay.

During this period, at the time when I was about to accept the post of Professor of Law at what was then called the Government Law School in Bombay, a perverted and humiliating attack was launched by some Anglo-Indian Dailies on the intelligence and capacity of Indian students. Odious references were made to their low intelligence, servile mentality, intellectual obsequiousness and morbid craze for passing examinations by cramming "cribs" or "keys". The attack, in course of time, assumed such an objectionable shape that I decided to participate in the controversy and write to the leading Bombay English daily, *The Times of India*, a reply,

extracts of which reproduced below will bear repetition even at this date, indicating a defence of the Indian student against charges which, even now, are not infrequent in hostile quarters in India or abroad.

The Indian student has been maligned and ridiculed for a tendency to cram and many critics have even gone the length of making sweeping generalisations regarding the Indian mind. But in spite of all that has been said against the Indian student, the fact remains that he has achieved remarkable success at the British Universities, where cramming for examinations is said to be not so popular or useful as in India. This single fact is sufficient to indicate that the tendency in question is not inherent in the constitution of the Indian mind but is the result of the present system of education and examination in India. Anti-quarians have told us that in ancient times wealth was counted by the heads of cattle which a person owned. In Indian examinations, for instance, in Law, we find a similar mode of determining the merit of students where his intellectual equipment is tested not so much by his knowledge of general principles as by the number of decided cases he can cite by name in his answer paper. It is not, therefore, uncommon to see students memorising by frequent effort the names in such cases. This is apart from the difficulty that the student is required to answer, within the short space of three hours, diverse and complicated questions on Evidence, Civil and Criminal Procedure, Limitation, Registration, a medley of subjects, which by its variety, resembles a mixed grill. The evil has of late so increased in the Law examinations that there is observable a general aversion amongst students to undertake the study of Law in anything like a rational and scientific manner and the timely recollection of decided cases and precedents being at a premium, the vagaries and the aberrations of the law engross more attention than general principles. The remedy will be found not in throwing ridicule on Indian students in and out of season but in reforming the nature of the test which he is called upon to satisfy.

This letter drew in its wake many others of a similar nature and eventually a meeting of students was held in Bombay to protest against this campaign of vilification. One beneficial result of this agitation was that gradually the nature of the questions in the Law examinations underwent a change, giving place to a rational and scientific study of legal principles in preference to cramming the names of decided cases.

Of all the public trials which I attended that of Bal Gangadhar Tilak was the most memorable. Apart from his great popularity, personal sacrifices and eminent leadership,

the public remembered the fact that previously he had figured in three criminal proceedings and received punishment for the free expression of his views. The first of such trials was in 1882, when he had to meet the charge of defaming Madhavrao Barve, the then Diwan of Kolhapur. On that occasion he was sentenced, along with the prominent social reformer Agarkar, to a term of imprisonment which he suffered in the Dongri Jail in Bombay for over a hundred days. The next trial was in 1897 for sedition under the Indian Penal Code. He was then sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment, of which he spent about a year in the Yeravada Jail at Poona. The third trial was in the year 1901 for perjury in certain matters arising out of a dispute relating to the estate of his intimate friend Baba Maharaj, the husband of the lady who later become famous under the name of Tai Maharaj. In that case, the initial sentence of eighteen months given by the Magistrate was reduced in appeal and was ultimately quashed by the High Court and he was acquitted by two eminent British Judges—Sir Lawrence Jenkins, Chief Justice, and Mr. Justice Batty, whose regime is still remembered at the High Court for its independence and impartiality.

The fourth trial was the one which is described below.

Being a hero of so many convictions, still alive and active, his trial excited great sympathy and curiosity. For several days, we awaited it in great excitement in the High Court and a friend of mine, an experienced author on Criminal Law, and myself decided to put at the disposal of Tilak all the help we could give him in the matter of his defence. We knew that he would not need it, as at one time he was himself a professor of Law and could get up a defence, legally perfect, if he was inclined to do so. But ours was merely a gesture of good-will and esteem on our part. The subsequent progress of the trial I shall narrate by brief references to the entries in my diary.

Thursday, 25 June 1908: Tilak arrested for sedition. I have read the impugned article. It does not appear at all seditious. Bail refused by Aston [the Magistrate]. No application made to the High Court.

Monday, 29 June: Tilak committed to the High Court Sessions. Large crowd and disturbances at the Police Court.

Thursday, 2 July: Bail refused to Tilak by Justice Davar. No reason assigned. A timid decision.

Friday, 3 July: Application by the Advocate-General for special Jury to try Tilak in the High Court, opposed on the ground that such Jury would contain many Europeans unable to understand the Marathi articles. Notwithstanding this, however, special Jury ordered by Davar. This trend of events was regarded at the Bar as throwing an ominous shadow upon possible future developments. The Bar much exercised over these incidents.

Saturday, 4 July: Hot discussion in the Bar Room about Tilak and his present-day politics.

Monday, 13 July: Tilak trial commenced. By some extraordinary circumstance, the Clerk of the Crown turned out of the Ballot Box 15 Europeans, 8 of whom, the maximum permitted under the law, were challenged by Tilak, but 7 got in, with 2 Parsis as jurors. On that day, B. V. Joshi, the Translator of the High Court, spoke about the correctness of his translation of the impugned articles.

Tuesday, 14th July: Tilak began his examination of Joshi on the translations. Tilak showed that these translations are unfair to the defence. Tilak's cross-examination was brilliant but the deadly fact remains that in the Jury there are 7 Europeans and 2 Indians (Parsis). This is British justice and this is how Davar kept his promise to give more Indians in the Jury.

Wednesday, 15 July: Tilak's cross-examination continued. He had to put in documents to rebut the mischievous presumption suggested by a card on which names of explosives were written. The result was that he lost his right of reply. The prosecution which had been conducted in an unfair spirit had not the graciousness to waive their right of reply. Tilak began his defence afterwards.

Thursday, 16 July: Tilak's defence continued. Spirited and bold. Sketched the history of Juries in England. I went to my lawyer friend and sat at his place occupied as a reporter till 12.30 midnight, talking to Tilak's Counsel in the case.

Friday, 17 July: Tilak's defence continued till 2-30 when the trial was adjourned till Monday morning to enable European Jurors to attend to the English Mail.

Monday, 20 July: Tilak's defence continued. The articles were read and commented on by him.

Tuesday, 21 July: Tilak's defence continued for whole day.

Wednesday, 22 July: Tilak's defence ended.

Branson, Prosecuting Counsel, began his address to the Jury, so vulgar, vindictive and gross that I left the Court in sheer disgust at 12-30. Branson behaved in a way unworthy of the tradition of the Bar.

While the trial lasted, Tilak was provided with accommodation on the upper floor of the High Court building. I attended the hearing during the day, took heavy notes, and

on the rising of the Court my friend and myself saw Tilak at his temporary quarters and discussed the day's proceedings with him. We suggested a number of legal defences, but what excited our deep admiration was his rejection of such defences as disingenuous short cuts to acquittal, which he did not desire to adopt, and his assertion that his defence was going to be on lines, not guided by the desire of acquittal, but forming a worthy answer of the educated classes of India to the challenge of the prosecution. My contact and my consequent esteem for Tilak increased enormously. As lawyers, my friend and myself could see a number of defences which, if skilfully advanced, would have made the prosecution at least partially abortive; but Tilak disdained them, regarding the trial as offering an opportunity for a defence worthy of the high cause of which he regarded himself as the custodian for the moment.

I had occasion in later years to appear in some other cases where other political leaders had been arraigned for sedition but few of them showed the stern determination of Tilak not to spoil the dignity of the defence by methods unworthy of the high purpose which was involved.

The trial proceeded from day to day. When the Chief Prosecuting Counsel Inverarity handled the prosecution, it was dignified and strictly legal and when in later years I became more intimate with Inverarity and knew his political views, the memory of his dignified behaviour at this trial often came back to my mind and occasionally formed the subject of our talk. Branson, on the other hand, the junior in charge of the prosecution, was very much the reverse and conducted it in the manner he was accustomed to in the petty civil and criminal cases in the High Court adopting the same devices, the same vituperation, the same hyperbole, the same repetition, which senior counsel, in my time, very rarely descended to. It seemed to me, watching Inverarity conducting the prosecution that he was conscious of its dignity and that the party in the dock was not an ordinary criminal but a person who was, for the moment, the protagonist of an advanced school of Indian politics.

Thus the trial proceeded. Tilak's defence, I often thought, was too theoretical and philosophical for the members of the jury, if not for the judge. Tilak's defence began on the 15th and ended on the 22nd of July. Then it again fell to Branson

to reply for the prosecution. He did his best to obtain a conviction, dealing summarily with the bulk of Tilak's argument with the brief comment that English Law was not applicable to India when the Indian Penal Code was explicit on any point. The question of Tilak's high motives, as alleged by him, in advising Government to bring about important reforms in the administration had no relevance; a criminal act, he observed, was never excused because it was done with the best of motives.

The Judge then delivered his address to the Jury which fairly indicated, within the limits permissible by the Law, how his mind was working. As he said towards the end of his address, his conception of the defence as offered by Tilak was very much different from Tilak's. Compare, for instance, the Judge's remarks to the Jury:

Consider the verdict most anxiously. It is a case of great importance to the accused. It means a great deal to him.

This indicates that the pedestal on which Tilak stood when offering his defence as a reply to the challenge of the prosecution on behalf of the educated classes, was never understood by the Judge. He took the defence as if it was an attempt to escape punishment. Contrasted with the great trials in the British history of freedom and the addresses of the Bench on such occasions, full of a suppressed awareness of the political significance of the trial, the judge's address in this trial seemed to be like the address in an upcountry Court in a petty political prosecution initiated by the collector of the district.

The case was prolonged beyond the usual Court hours and it appeared as if it had been arranged that before midnight Tilak would be sentenced and despatched to an unknown destination. It is a curious fact, but none the less true, that the precise sentence pronounced by the Judge towards midnight was being talked of at 5-30 in the evening amongst the members of the Bar, who, it was said, had derived the information from a highly placed police officer attending to the case.

The jury returned after considering the verdict at about 9-20 p.m., after about four hours of deliberation. The Foreman, a European, in reply to the Court, said that the Jury were

not unanimous but were divided in the proportion of 7 to 2, seven finding Tilak guilty and the two contra. It will be noticed, as stated above, that there were 7 Europeans and 2 Indians, so it was not difficult to realise that all the Europeans brought in a verdict of guilty and the two Indians, not guilty. The Foreman stated to the Judge that there was no prospect of a unanimous verdict.

The Judge accepted the verdict of the majority and, before he passed the sentence, Branson asked permission to put in evidence Tilak's previous conviction, which was permissible at that stage. The Judge gave the permission and asked Tilak to plead to the charge of previous convictions, observing that it was relevant at that stage to enable the prosecution to ask for enhancement of sentence. Tilak then admitted the fact of his previous convictions. Tilak had asked that, some of the points arising in the case being of great importance, it should be reserved for the consideration of a full Bench of the High Court. The Judge rejected the application, observing that he had carefully considered all these points and there was no need to reserve them for a full Bench occasion. The Judge then asked Tilak if he had anything to say. Tilak replied as follows:

In spite of the verdict of the Jury, I still maintain that I am innocent. There is a Providence watching over the destinies of nations and men and He has willed that I should serve the cause that I have at heart more by my pain and suffering than by my pen and tongue.

Davar then inflicted an unnecessarily offensive homily on Tilak as follows:

It seems to me that it must be a diseased mind, a most perverted mind that can think that the articles that you have written are legitimate articles to write on political agitation. They are seething with sedition; they preach violence; they speak of murders with approval; and the cowardly and atrocious act of committing murders by bomb not only seems to meet with your approval but you hail the advent of bombs in India for its good. As I said it would be only a diseased and perverted mind that could consider that bombs are legitimate instruments in political agitation and it would be a diseased mind that could ever have thought that the articles that you have written could be legitimately written. . . . I say such journalism is a curse to the country.

On each of the two charges he sentenced Tilak to three

year's transportation and departing from the practice generally followed in such cases, the Judge ordered that the sentences should run not concurrently but consecutively, inflicting thereby total transportation for six years.

Tilak was then removed. We had been hearing the whole evening that a train had been kept ready waiting for him opposite the High Court in which he was to be removed. The mantle of dark midnight had then settled on the City and its residents were perhaps unconscious of what was happening at that dark hour in the great High Court of Bombay. We learnt a few days later that Tilak had been transported to serve the sentence at Mandalay in Burma.

It was a well-known fact at the time that the offending articles were not written by Tilak but by a Sub-Editor of the paper and though Tilak took bravely upon himself the entire responsibility for these articles, it was largely felt at the Bar that, though this was the true legal position arising from the fact that Tilak was the editor, proprietor and publisher of the paper *Kesari*, the Sub-Editor should have boldly come out and made the fact known of his authorship instead of remaining content with the immunity which Tilak's generosity conferred on him. Having regard to the homily which the Judge preached to Tilak it will be interesting to reproduce a brief summary of these articles to enable a dispassionate reader, even at this distance of time, to judge whether the judge's strictures were justified.

The offending articles were two in number, both in Marathi, appearing in the *Kesari*, a weekly Marathi newspaper published at Poona of which Tilak, as stated above, was the editor, proprietor and publisher. The first article was of the 12th of May 1908 headed, 'The Country's Misfortune' (English translation). The second article was of the 9th of June 1908 headed 'These Remedies Are Not Lasting' (English translation).

I may briefly say that the first article took a rapid survey of the grievances then largely felt by the educated classes in India and stated that if Government resorted to oppressive Russian methods of administration, then the helpless Indian subjects, in their disappointment at the failure of constitutional agitation, might be compelled to imitate partially at least the methods of the Russian people. That the Indian leaders whose loyalty and good sense were beyond doubt, like Gokhale, had

placed, even on the floor of the Legislative Houses, these facts and pointed out that the proper remedy was not repression but reforming the administration so as to share power with the representatives of the people.

The gist of the second article was that disappointment at the failure of constitutional agitation was driving some hot-headed youths to the cult of the bomb and that scientific knowledge about preparing the bomb being now easily available in India to hot-headed youth and the secret manufacture of bombs being easily possible without detection, the suppression of the spread of this knowledge would be ineffective and the real effective remedy was a genuine reform of the administration not the stifling of popular agitation. In a large country like India, if a few hot-heads had recourse to the bomb, the large majority of the people condemned such methods and could be won over only by a genuine reform of the administration.

It is not possible in this short narrative to give even brief extracts of these articles. These would show, more conclusively than the above summary, that the Judge completely misconceived the true purpose of these articles. As stated above, the articles were in high-flown Marathi, for which the paper *Kesari* has been noted, and a Parsee Judge could easily misconceive the true nature of the articles owing to his unfamiliarity with high-class Marathi diction. The same features ran through some other articles produced by the prosecution as evidence in the case.

The practice then in vogue was that British Judges, ignorant of the language of the offending writing, used to convict for sedition on the basis of a translation made by the Government translator. Fortunately, the practice has now practically disappeared after the advent of Indian freedom, but, while it lasted, it always appeared to me as absurd as if a Japanese politician was tried in London for sedition on the basis of articles written in literary Japanese, of which a Government translation was supplied to the British Judge completely ignorant of the Japanese language.

The next trial of political importance related to Shivaram Mahadeo Paranjape, the printer, publisher and editor of a paper called *Kal*, published in Poona. Paranjape was a well-known figure in the political life of Maharashtra during the time he conducted his paper. I met him first in the Senior

M. A. Class at Elphinstone College, Bombay, while I was a junior student. He then looked a stern, meditative, reticent student, proud and dignified, with a caustic tongue whenever he used it. In later life, he came to occupy a prominent place amongst the politicians of Maharashtra. He was an admirable speaker and writer in Marathi. The chief features of his speeches and writings were their intensely deep and earnest tone, their figures of speech, their fervid patriotism, hatred of foreign rule, and a desire to revive the ancient glories of Maharashtra. His speeches often contained ample references to Sanskrit classics and to incidents in Maratha history, for which studies he had a deep passion. He went about aristocratically dressed in the conservative Poona Sardar style, with ample personal decorations, and carried about himself a fascinating perfume. In broad principles, he appeared to be a follower of Tilak, though the circles in which he moved thought that he went beyond the Tilak school, both in the frankness and vehemence of his views and their expression. The younger men adored him and on one or two occasions an open rupture between his school and Tilak's had only been avoided by the good sense of both parties.

My diary entries of the time record the details of his case. The Presidency Magistrate of Bombay had refused to release him on bail, whereupon the matter was placed before the High Court. On 26 June 1908, the diary entry is as follows:

Paranjape of *Kal* released on bail by Davar. Judge's attitude in strong contrast with that of one or two timid Hindu Judges.

The impugned article was in Marathi of 15 May 1908. This article was the basis of the prosecution under Sections 124A (sedition) and 153A (creating enmity between communities) under the Indian Penal Code. Before I proceed to describe the progress of the case, it would be appropriate to state briefly the nature and contents of the offending article. A few extracts translated into English are as below:

(1) Government need not have shown indecent hurry in giving rewards to those Indian Policemen who succeeded in arresting culprits alleged to be concerned in the throwing of the bomb in Bengal. It would have been more seemly if Government had waited until the alleged culprits had been found by a judicial tribunal guilty of the accusation. Such undue hurry creates a wrong impression upon the mind of

Indians. There is the additional fact that the recipients of the prizes were all Indians, exclusive of the European Police Officers, concerned in detecting the crime. The case of the British Government rests upon much stronger foundations than the holding of meetings and ovations, having for their purpose the creation of loyalty. Such meetings deceive very few people and cannot conceal the fact that public opinion is not in favour of the Government to the extent that it should be. Therefore our humble request to the Government is that they should not be guilty of such action and thereby exasperate the people. The time has now come when Government should be guided by public opinion and not *vice versa* and if Government cannot obtain public approval by such methods, it would be advisable not to resort to contrary ways.

(2) The view is no more prevalent that the advent of the British Government is a great blessing to the Indian people and amounts to a dispensation of Providence. Such views are now replaced by the language "We want Swaraj. It is our birthright and we shall do for its acquisition all that is possible." It is not a question of bringing political pressure upon the views of the people and it is most desirable that the British Government should make the people contented as soon as possible.

These two extracts will serve to explain the general trend of the offending article and will also be found useful in understanding the nature of the address which Paranjape, at a later stage, made to the Jury empanelled in his case. My diary entry of 6 July states as follows:

Kal trial commenced today. Jury, two Mohammedans, three Parsees, four Europeans, not one Hindu. I am told that two of the Parsees are *dubashes* and beholden to the Government for contracts, and do not understand Marathi and have a smattering of English. Branson, the Advocate-General, appeared for the prosecution. He was assisted by Inverarity and Binning. At a certain stage, Jinnah appeared for the defence, though Paranjape, the accused, at a later stage, conducted his own defence and this proved useful. Branson's opening was a heated one, not calm, as suited the dignity of the occasion and in one or two places it was unfair and unnecessarily offensive to Indian aspirations. Paranjape, who appeared a little excited in the beginning, did not challenge any juror or cross-examine any witness. An application, as in the Tilak case, was made for a special Jury. It was opposed on the same ground that a special Jury would contain more Europeans, ignorant of Marathi and it would be harmful to the defence. Davar, however, over-ruled this objection, giving reasons which were considered by the Bar somewhat extraordinary, viz. that there was no rule of law that the Jury should know the language of the offending articles.

Besides, there would be official English translations and the language of the Court was English.

My diary entry proceeds as follows:

Paranjape is defending himself and made a bold and straightforward defence.

Davar J.'s attitude was shrewdly neutral, but I am afraid he will convict the accused in the end. Karandikar, Khaparde, Gandhi and Gharpure, pleaders, were assisting Paranjape. The Police arrangements were obtrusively strict.

Paranjape's address was eloquent, manly and straightforward and, in most cases, convincing. His explanations, however, of some of the points, for instance, his Socratic method of writing was too technical for the Jury to understand. It appears to me that, except in the statement about treachery, there is no sedition in any of the passages of his writings. The whole attempt of the writer appears to be to draw the attention of the Government to the hopeless unpopularity into which they have got and to recommend to them the adoption of conciliatory measures. Davar's address to the Jury was the result of a misconception of the trend and details of the Marathi articles, arising perhaps from his unfamiliarity with the language and his habitual inability to penetrate into the depth of the principles of the law of sedition as it requires to be interpreted in these times.

I listened to Davar's address very carefully and felt no doubt that the Jury would ultimately return a verdict of guilty; in what proportion it was difficult to say. Branson's address was brief and mainly depended upon selected passages from the offending article. Branson advanced one argument which probably proved successful with the Jury, viz. that the offending articles were written not for the educated public of Bombay but for the people of Poona and the surroundings, with intent to create amongst them a feeling that Government oppressed the people. Paranjape's address was a very long one and, I feared, too philosophical and technical for the non-Maraththa Jurymen.

The Jury retired for nearly two hours and it is said that one of them, a Parsee juror, had high words with the anti-Indian-looking European Foreman. The Jury returned after long deliberation. They had then the appearance of having had a hot time. The Foreman first gave his verdict—5 for guilty, 4 against. The Judge inquired if there was a chance of their being unanimous. The Foreman replied, Yes, if their

qualified verdict would be accepted. He wrote the 'qualified verdict' on a piece of paper and the Judge accepted it. The verdict was as follows:

The Jury unanimously find the accused guilty of both the charges. The majority however are of opinion that the accused was actuated by motives of patriotism and, for that reason, they strongly recommend the accused to mercy.

Davar accepted this verdict but we all thought that he had a good opportunity of quashing the trial and felt further that if the accused was actuated, as the Jury said, by motives of patriotism, it might be an offence under the Penal Code but under extenuatory circumstances. But Davar accepted the verdict in its entirety and sentenced Paranjape to rigorous imprisonment for 15 months on the first charge (under Section 124-A) and for 4 months on the second charge (under Section 153-A). The sentences were to run consecutively, which we thought was somewhat harsh in the light of many expressions in favour of the accused contained in his address to the Jury. Though the trial terminated in a conviction, it was a moral victory for the defence in two senses: (1) because the two non-Hindu Jurors were Government contractors and yet sided with the accused, and (2) for the first time in the history of criminal trials at the High Court of Bombay, patriotism was recognised, though in a small measure, as a palliating circumstance. The opinion at the Bar was that the sentences were harsher than necessary to vindicate the law. Even the most sectional opinion amongst the Parsees at the Bar was this, the non-Parsee opinion was of course stronger. Thus ended the trial on 9 July 1908.

This trial was followed by two others for sedition: (1) of Ganesh Damodar Savarkar, elder brother of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the great Hindu political leader; and (2) of Bhaskar Balwant Bhopatkar, Editor of a paper *Bhala* at Poona. I have not thought it necessary to burden the pages of this narrative with the details of these two trials, because the feeling at the Bar, which I shared fully, was in strong disapproval of the attitude adopted by the accused in both these cases and it was felt that the level of dignity, courage and integrity which the cause of Indian freedom had reached during the two previous trials of Tilak and Paranjape had been immeasurably lowered by the attitude of the accused in these two later cases.

The next criminal trial related to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. He was charged, along with 30 others, with the offence of conspiracy, punishable under several sections of the Indian Penal Code. All the accused were committed for trial before a Special Bench of the High Court constituted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. The Bench consisted of Chief Justice Scott, Chandavarkar and Heaton. The trial was held on 6 October 1910. Savarkar, who had been arrested in England under circumstances mentioned below and brought to India under the Fugitive Offenders Act, 1881, had made an attempt to escape at Marseilles. Relying on the fact that he had then set foot on French soil, he claimed the asylum of that country, and contended that a British Indian Court had no jurisdiction over him. He refused, on that account, to take any part in the trial and asked for an adjournment and for facilities to make representation to the British and the French Governments regarding what he contended was his illegal arrest in Marseilles after he had escaped from the custody of the British police officers and landed on French territory. His application was rejected by the Court in Bombay on the ground that it was beyond the province of that Court to do anything more than try him for the offences in respect of which he had been committed for trial. The trial then proceeded against him and the other accused jointly.

At the hearing in the High Court, Baptista appeared for the accused and repeated the contention that the re-arrest at Marseilles being illegal, the trial was without jurisdiction. Upon this, the Court heard arguments as to what would be the effect on the trial, assuming that the arrest was illegal. Baptista contended, on the basis of certain decisions, including a Privy Council ruling, that although the relevant section (Section 188 of the Criminal Procedure Code of 1898) required merely that the accused must be "found" at the place of control in British India, the expression "found" must be taken in its natural sense. If so, the expression cannot refer to the case of a prisoner brought by force to India but only to the case of one who comes of his own accord to the place where he is being tried. "Found" does not mean "actually" present but present voluntarily and not involuntarily brought under an illegal arrest.

The question of the legality of the arrest, including the

question of asylum claimed by a fugitive, was very important, relating to the case not only of Savarkar but of fugitives generally under similar circumstances. The hearing was, therefore, watched with great interest but the judgment of the Bench delivered by Chief Justice Scott evaded a decision on this point and decided the case on the assumption that the arrest was illegal. So shorn, the case related only to the interpretation of the expression "found". The Court held that neither the jurisdiction of the Magistrate or the High Court to try the case could be affected by any illegality in the re-arrest of Savarkar which might have occurred at Marseilles. The decision thus lost its importance as a ruling on the important question of the right of a fugitive to claim asylum in a foreign country.

Notwithstanding this fact, however, some of the circumstances relating to Savarkar in England and at Marseilles are, even at this date, worth perusal both for their intrinsic importance and the popular personality of Savarkar who is still an interesting figure in Indian public life.

While in England, Savarkar intensified the movement for Indian freedom and, at a certain stage, visited Paris with a view to improving his health which had been shattered under the stress of a tragic bereavement. Notwithstanding his grief however, he carried on his agitation even from Paris for the freedom of India, which at one time had reached the stage of sending fire-arms to India. The British Police was fully aware of this activity, but, as Savarkar was in Paris, it was difficult to make any progress with his arrest and prosecution. It is suggested by one of Savarkar's admirers that he was drawn back to England by a ruse, the details of which it is unnecessary to consider in this short narrative. He reached England on 13 March 1910 and was arrested at a London station.

One of the interesting questions raised at that time was whether, having first come to England under a lawful passport and having later openly visited Paris, he could be charged as a fugitive absconding from England, within the terms of the British Fugitive Offenders Act. When the news of his arrest in London was broadcast, a London paper, *The Indian Socialist*, started a defence fund for his benefit. He however remained in police custody and, during his detention, attempts were made by his friends to arrange that the trial should take place in England, in which case his acquittal was regarded

as more probable than if he was sent back and tried in India. While he was detained in prison, several attempts were made by his friends to organise his escape.

Savarkar was eventually tried in England on two charges: (1) Abetting murder in India by supplying fire-arms from England, and (2) Sedition in India. The question whether he could be regarded as an absconding fugitive was not given the importance it deserved and ultimately the British Magistrate decided in effect that, as regards the main question whether Savarkar should be tried in England or sent back to India, there was enough evidence before him to convince him that, taking the offences as proved, the trial should be by a Court in England. But the offences having been committed with reference to India, the question whether it was desirable that the accused should be tried in India would be better decided by the King's Bench Division in England.

There was accordingly an appeal to that Court. Sir Rufus Isaacs (later Lord Reading) and Mr. Rowlatt (who later became famous in connection with the Rowlatt Act) appeared for the prosecution. The importance of this appeal lay in the fact that, in the course of the argument, Rufus Isaacs made a reference to the *Bande Mataram* song as a call to the people of India to start seditious activities. On this, one of the Judges inquired whether merely to recite the song would be illegal. Counsel replied that it would all depend on whether the implications of the song were to excite the people of India to obtain freedom by force of arms. The Chief Justice of England thereupon remarked that it would not be sedition merely to discuss the freedom of the country. Ultimately the decision was pronounced by the Chief Justice that it was desirable to send the accused to India. Savarkar's speeches, out of which the charge of sedition arose, were in the Marathi language and consequently it would be more beneficial to the accused that his trial should take place in India. One of the Judges, however, added that, as the trial in India was likely to be before a special Tribunal without a Jury, such inquiry was more likely to be harmful to the accused than if he were tried in England with the assistance of a Jury. In spite of this view, however, the Judge agreed with the ultimate decision of the Chief Justice. An appeal was preferred from this decision to two Judges—Lord Justice Vaughan Williams and Lord Justice Fletcher Moulton—who ultimately dismissed

the appeal. Savarkar's counsel endeavoured to obtain a decision on the important question whether the accused was an "absconding fugitive" under the relevant Act. But the question remained undecided by the ultimate Court of appeal in spite of an expression of opinion by Lord Justice Vaughan Williams that, from the circumstances mentioned before the Court, it would be more just to have the accused tried in England. Thus ended the appeal.

Preparations were thereafter made for sending Savarkar to India. While this was being done, Savarkar, who was lodged in Brixton Jail in London, wrote several letters to his friends, extracts from two of which are worth quoting.

Brixton Prison
21 June 1910

May the Goddess of Freedom be propitious

My dear friend,

The case does not seem to end today. Of course both of us know the result already. Tomorrow the formal result will be known.

By this time, my dear friend, I have got quite used to the food and the mode of living here. It was good that I did not ask for special food from the beginning. Now, to make me a full-fledged life-transportee, only a change of clothes is wanting. By the by, I got the new suit our friends prepared for me. It is a very nice one. I will enjoy it on the voyage.

I am in excellent health, and have added two pounds to my weight (not by growing a four-pound weight beard). I am sure you will be glad to hear it.

Be writing to me, the sort of ennobling letters which you had written so many times. One of them I got while just starting for the Court to hear the foregone decision. It makes me forget all the distance between us and makes me feel as if you were with me, side by side in a meeting or in the room, nursing me or chatting with me on the exalted topic of the rising of the people, the re-birth of a race.

With kindest memory,

My dear Friend,
Brotherly yours,
V. D. Savarkar

Another letter was as follows:

We part to play our God-appointed parts; now pent and nailed to

burning Rocks; now tossed on surging waves of Fame; now seen, now lost; or humble or exalted; wherever posted by the Lord of Hosts, yet posted best, as if alone it was the mission of our life thus there to act.

As in some oriental play sublime, all characters, the dead as well as living, in the Epilogue meet; Thus actors we—innumerable all—once more shall meet on History's copious Stage before the great applauding audience of Humanity, that would, with grateful cheer, fill hill and dale. Till then, Oh loving friends, Farewell; Farewell.

Wherever may my humble ashes lie, in the Andamans sad brook whose weeping course adds to its dreariness a tongue, or stored by Ganga's sacred crystal stream, in which the stars their midnight measures dance—They (ashes) will be stirred with fire and glow, when Victory's trumpet-blasts proclaiming "Shri Ram has crowned his chosen people's brow with laurels golden green". The evil spirit is cast away and chased back to the deep, from whence it first arose. And lo She lordly stands, our Mother Ind, a beacon light Humanity to guide; Oh martyred saints and soldiers do awake! The battle is won in which you fought and fell!

"Till then, Oh Loving Friends, Farewell, Farewell!"

Ultimately, on 1 July 1910, Savarkar was placed on the steamship *Morea*. The idea of taking him by rail from Calais to Marseilles was found impracticable, for fear that during the journey Savarkar's confederates would find means of kidnapping him. On board the ship, it appears from Savarkar's own writings, he was kept in comfortable surroundings; he was dressed in European costume and mixed freely with the other passengers. For four days, his journey to Marseilles was pleasant, except for a brief period in the Bay of Biscay. His mind was however busy with finding some means of escape and with an ingenuity admirable in his then surroundings, he measured the porthole to discover whether it was possible to escape through it. He got time to do this while the ship was rolling in the Bay of Biscay and, pretending to lose his balance, he approached the porthole and could thus have a rough measure of that exit.

It was kept a secret that the boat would stop at Marseilles. But, for the purpose of effecting some repairs and also for coaling, the boat put in at Marseilles on the night of 7 July and anchored at some distance from the shore. Waiting for a fitting opportunity, Savarkar, managed to enter the bath-room and, sending the policeman on the watch on some errand, with cool courage, he squeezed himself through the

porthole and jumped into the sea. There were current, at that time, various press versions in India and England as regards the method of his escape and what happened thereafter. The version, however, which ultimately was made the basis of legal proceedings, was as follows:

Next morning [Friday] early, about 6 o'clock, Savarkar desired to be taken to the lavatory but was prevailed upon to wait till about an hour later. In the morning, he was taken to the lavatory by the Scotland Yard officer [who accompanied him on the journey, assisted by Indian policemen]. The Scotland Yard officer deputed one Indian policeman to look after the prisoner. Meanwhile, Savarkar had quickly closed and bolted the lavatory door. The policeman, finding the door closed, peeped through the crevice at the top of the door and noticed Savarkar endeavouring to get through the porthole.

Instead of raising an alarm at once, he tried to break down the door, smashing two panes of glass in the fruitless effort. Savarkar, who is 36" round the chest, succeeded in getting through a 12" circular porthole, after scraping his body very severely in the process. Dropping into the water, he swam to the pier, when he was observed by the Quarter Master and the Steward of the *Morea*. These men immediately gave chase. Running to the Gendarme at the customs barrier [on the shore], Savarkar begged to be taken before a Magistrate. The Gendarme, however, brought him back to the ship and handed him over to his guardians.

To this version the French Press added the following details:

Savarkar was prevented from holding any conversation with French officials while the *Morea*, on which he was being taken out to Bombay, was in French waters. Savarkar, on arriving at Marseilles, requested to be landed, claiming that he had been wrongfully arrested. His request was, of course, refused. Two French officers went on board the *Morea* but were not allowed to speak to Savarkar. He then decided to escape.

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Having gained the shore, he saw that two English detectives and three of the *Morea's* officers were in pursuit. He ran about 300 yards but his pursuers gained on him and he turned to a French Gendarme for help, asking to be taken at once to the Commissary of Police. At this moment, the detectives arrived and one of them took Savarkar by the neck, the other by the arm. In this brutal fashion, he was taken on board, put in chains and kept in the strictest secrecy.

Whichever version is accepted, the fact is clear that Savarkar had reached French soil and contacted a French Gendarme

and that when he was re-arrested by the Gendarme and by the British Policeman, he was actually on French territory. The importance of this fact will appear in connection with later proceedings stated below. One more detail was accepted by the Court at the Hague that Savarkar was arrested as a fugitive after a pursuit of about 500 metres.

The *Morea* left Marseilles on 9 July and reached Bombay. During the journey Savarkar's health suffered considerably as he had been deprived of all the freedom and conveniences which he had previously enjoyed. So, when he reached Bombay on 22 July 1910, he was fairly unwell.

His case created a great sensation in England, India and in France. For days, it was the topic of sensational writings. The British official view was stated by the London *Times* in its issue of 7 October 1910:

It is of course to be deeply regretted that the fate of such a prisoner should, in the event of his conviction in the Indian Courts, be dependent upon the decision of another tribunal on points of International Law, which, however important in themselves, are wholly irrelevant to his actual guilt. But, for this, we have unfortunately only to thank the ineptitude of our own officials, first that of the officials responsible for sending Savarkar out to India in a ship that touched at any foreign port, while there were so many ships available that sailed direct from England to India and secondly, that of the officials actually in charge of Savarkar during the voyage on board the *Morea*, through whose inconceivable negligence he was allowed so obvious a chance to escape.

The London *Times* thus saw clearly the important political issues which the trial would eventually raise and, with its usual adroitness, it disposed of them with the statement that, however important these questions might be from the international point of view, they were wholly irrelevant to the actual guilt. This was exactly the plea which was later accepted by the Magistrate and the High Court in Bombay.

In foreign papers however there was a campaign of criticism which continued for several months. It may be mentioned that at the time when Savarkar landed on French soil, the Mayor of Marseilles was a Socialist of the name of Jean Jaures, conducting a paper called *L'Humanité*, and in the issue of that paper of 12 July, the following criticism appeared:

This abominable violation of the right of asylum was effected in

absolute secrecy. Had it not been for a telegram published yesterday in the *Paris Daily Mail*, we should still have been ignorant of the incident.

But it is quite impossible that the matter can be allowed to rest here. In delivering up a political refugee, the Marseilles authorities—admitting that they had acted on their own initiative—have committed an outrage of which an account will most assuredly be demanded and, in respect of which, the sanction of the State is necessary.

The question excited criticism in England, Germany and other European countries and eventually a combined demand was made that the proceedings against Savarkar in India should be postponed and that he should be handed back to the French Government. The Socialist Mayor of Marseilles and other writers persisted in their criticism that the French Government had violated an important right of asylum, of which England herself was the protagonist. She often felt very proud, they said, that she gave asylum to Mazzini during his fight with Austria and also to Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, and England went to the length of declaring war to protect this right of asylum in the year 1850, when the affair known as the Don Passifico incident arose in connection with Greece and France, and in 1853 she threatened similar action against China. Europe was now waiting, they said, to see, in the light of these incidents, how England would behave on the present occasion. Ultimately the pressure became very intense and, in a cable from Paris dated 19 July 1910, the following statement appeared:

The French Government, in view of the fact that Savarkar actually landed on French soil, have requested the British Government to suspend the trial, till full reports of the case are received.

European Embassies also, in course of time, concerned themselves with this issue. For instance, the Deputy Ambassadors of Spain and Portugal took active interest in the matter. A writer on international matters in England raised the question that, the surrender of a fugitive must be an international act. A surrender by Local Authorities is invalid unless Local Authorities are expressly authorised by their Government to give up a criminal.

Matters progressed rapidly even in England and the following statement in the issue of the *Daily Mail* of 3 August

1910, indicated the state of public feeling in England:

The illegality of Savarkar's surrender is so plain that the only defence so far attempted has been to suggest that the British Government cannot be responsible for the errors of a French policeman. That argument is entirely fallacious, because the error and the offence were committed by the French policeman in conjunction with the British officials and would have been impossible without the co-operation of British officials. We need not dwell upon the fatal consequences if we insist on not returning Savarkar to French custody and taking chances under the extradition treaty. Having ourselves maintained the legitimacy of our action, we should be unable to protest if a British policeman were, in the future, to hand over a fugitive Garibaldi or Kossuth to a foreign Government. The right of asylum, instead of being under the protection of the law, would be at the mercy of the arbitrary caprice or the corruptibility of the meanest police constable.

The argument in favour of the right of asylum could not have been better stated. Even the *Morning Post*, with all its Conservative traditions, took the same view and Mr. Keir Hardie raised the question at a Conference in Copenhagen on 6 September 1910, and had a resolution passed that every attending country must regard as valuable the right of asylum and, accordingly, Savarkar must be handed over to the French Government. It was expected that in response to this agitation the British Government in India would at least postpone Savarkar's trial.

Proceedings against Savarkar at the initial stage began in Bombay in September 1910, while correspondence was going on between France and England. About this time the *London Times* in its editorial columns wrote as follows:

The French Government demanded the surrender of Savarkar on the ground of his having landed on French soil and having thereby established the right to asylum. This demand the British Government were unable to concede as, in the opinion of their law officers, the right of asylum could not, in the circumstances, be properly pleaded. The issue was joined upon highly controversial points of International Law, which have never yet been authoritatively settled. The correspondence which ensued between the two Governments showed no prospect of any agreement, either as to the principle involved or even as to some of the facts connected with the prisoner's re-capture.

The above view was apparently held by the official classes in England. Notwithstanding this, however, the agitation

increased until the lawyers and statesmen of England suggested a measure which they thought would put an end finally to this dispute, viz. that the whole question might be referred to the tribunal at the Hague. Accordingly, on 25 October 1910, an agreement was entered into between France and England, signed by Monsieur Paul Cambon on behalf of France, and Sir Edward Grey on behalf of England. A material extract from this agreement would prove interesting:

The Government of the French Republic and the Government of His Britannic Majesty, having agreed, by means of an exchange of notes dated October 4 and 5, 1910, to submit to arbitration, on the one hand, the question of fact and right raised by the arrest and the taking back on board the steamship *Morea* on 8th of July 1910, at Marseilles, of the Indian Vinayak Damodar Savarkar who escaped from the boat on which he was a prisoner, and on the other hand, the claim of the Government of the Republic for the surrender of Savarkar, the undersigned, duly authorised to that effect, have agreed on the following arrangements:

ARTICLE I: An Arbitration Tribunal composed as set forth below will be charged to decide the following question:

Ought Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, in conformity with the rules of International Law, to be or not to be surrendered by the Government of His Britannic Majesty to the Government of the French Republic?

[Articles II, IV and V related to the procedure and venue.]

ARTICLE VI: The decision will have to be issued in the shortest possible time, 30 days at the most, after the date of the meeting at the Hague or that of the handing in of the written explanations which will be furnished to it at its request. The time, however, may be prolonged, if the Tribunal so demands, provided that the two chief contracting parties consent to such a step.

Done in London in two copies, the 25th day of October, 1910.

Paul Cambon
E. Grey

It will be noted that though the proceedings against Savarkar had commenced in Bombay before the date of this agreement, they were allowed to be continued notwithstanding this agreement and conviction was obtained and also the sentence to transportation for life and confiscation of Savarkar's property. Further, the Government commenced in January 1911

other proceedings against Savarkar after this agreement and likewise obtained a conviction on 30 January 1911, i.e. before the proceedings at the Hague commenced. The result was that, at the date of those proceedings at the Hague, Savarkar was a twice-convicted felon and not merely an accused. What effect this had upon the decision of the tribunal at the Hague, it is difficult to say. The proceedings at the Hague terminated by a decision on 24 February 1911. It was expected that the proceedings would continue for an adequately long time but they terminated within a week. The decision proceeded to record the following findings:

On the 7th of July the *Morea* arrived at Marseilles. On the following morning, between 6 and 7, Savarkar swam ashore and then began to run. He was arrested by a Brigadier of the French Maritime Gendarmerie and taken back to the vessel. Three persons who had come ashore from the vessel assisted the Brigadier in taking the fugitive back. On July 9, the *Morea* left Marseilles with Savarkar on board.

It appears that the Brigadier saw the fugitive throw himself into the sea and swim to the quay. At the same moment, some persons from the ship, who were shouting and gesticulating, rushed ashore in order to pursue him. A number of people on the quay commenced to shout, "*Arrêtez-le*". The Brigadier arrested the fugitive after a pursuit of 500 metres. The Brigadier declares that he was altogether unaware of the identity of the fugitive but thought that he was one of the crew who had possibly committed an offence on board. With regard to the assistance offered him by one of the crew and two Indian policemen, it appears that these men came up after the arrest had been effected and their intervention was only auxiliary to the action of the Brigadier. The Brigadier had seized Savarkar by one arm for the purpose of taking him back to the ship and the prisoner went peacefully with him. The Brigadier did not release his hold till they reached the deck of the vessel. It would appear that the incident did not occupy more than a few minutes.

It is alleged that the Brigadier was not ignorant of the presence of Savarkar on board the vessel and that his orders, like those of the French Police and Gendarmes, were to prevent any Hindu from coming on board who had not got a ticket. These circumstances show that the persons on board in charge of Savarkar might well have believed that they could count on the assistance of the French police.

It is established that a Commissaire of the French police came on board the vessel shortly after its arrival and, in accordance with the orders of the Prefect, placed himself at the disposal of the Commander in respect of the watch to be kept. In consequence of this, the Commissaire was put in communication with the British police officer in charge

of the prisoner. The Prefect of Marseilles, as appears from the telegram of July 13, addressed to the Minister of the Interior, stated that he had acted in this matter in accordance with the instructions given by the Directeur de la Surete Generale to make the necessary arrangements to prevent the escape of Savarkar.

The judgement continued:

Whereas, having regard to what has been stated, it is manifest that the case is not one of recourse to fraud or force in order to obtain possession of a person who had taken refuge in foreign country, and that there was not in the circumstances of the arrest and delivery of Savarkar to the British Authority and of his removal to India anything in the nature of the violation of the Sovereignty of France and that all those who took part in the matter certainly acted in good faith and had no thought of doing anything unlawful.

Whereas, in the circumstances cited above, the conduct of the Brigadier not having been disclaimed by his Chiefs before the morning of July 9, i.e. before the *Morea* left Marseilles, the British Police might naturally have believed that the Brigadier had acted in accordance with his instructions or that his conduct had been approved.

Whereas, while admitting that an irregularity was committed by the arrest of Savarkar and by his being handed over to the British Police, there is no rule of International law imposing, in circumstances such as those which have been set out above, any obligation on the Power, which has in its custody a prisoner, to restore him because of a mistake committed by the foreign agent who delivered him to that Power.

The fact came out at this time that this decision was not unanimous. The Continental papers commented that the real point of dispute had been glossed over in the judgement. British papers like the *Manchester Guardian* were equally critical and observed that the decision must stagger the public. The *Daily News* commented as follows, putting the main point in a nutshell:

This judgement reduces the right of asylum to very narrow limits. According to the judgement, to put the matter in its extreme form, a Prince called Kropotkin might conceivably be kidnapped by Russian agents in collusion with British police and without the knowledge or consent of the British Government and no rule of International Law could be invoked for his restoration. The decision serves to emphasise the urgent need for the establishment, as supplementary to the Arbitration Courts at the Hague, of a permanent Court of International Law, from which, not negative compromises, but sensible authoritative judgements could be obtained.

Similar criticism was made by some members of Parliament. The paper *Sociologist* published in England observed as follows:

The decision of the International Tribunal at the Hague has shattered all faith in the maintenance of the rights of political refugees as ordinarily understood and it is sad to observe that the nations, hitherto most conspicuous for their love of liberty, are slow to recognise these rights when they are beset by political considerations. *L'Humanite* was after all justified in finding that the submission of *l'affaire* to arbitration in the first instance was a tactical error on the part of France and a friend, who was a member of the British Parliament, assures us that the way in which France submitted her case ensured its failure, all the strongest grounds having been omitted.

I shall bring to an end my description of the important trials within this period by referring to the last of them which related to Anant Kanhere who was found guilty of murdering the Collector, A. M. T. Jackson, at Nasik with a pistol, which was alleged to have been one of the many sent by Savarkar from London. The story of these pistols reaching India is very intriguing. They were sent with an Italian lady. In her luggage, there was a deck-chair and these pistols were sewn into its canvas. The lady arrived in India but first stopped at Ceylon and later in the Nizam's territory and it was believed that the pistols which had arrived with her were secretly sent to their destinations.

In the early days of Savarkar and even during his stay in England, Nasik was the scene of extreme political activity conducted by an old association, which he had founded, called *Abhinava Bharat* (New India). After the crowded political events which culminated in the murder of Curzon Wylie by Madanlal Dhingra in London, its reverberations appeared in India, notably in Nasik. Collector Jackson was a reputed Sanskrit scholar and, it was believed, a great admirer of Indians, their language and literature. He was, therefore, it was alleged, posted at Nasik specially to cure the city of its disaffection. Jackson's reputation, as a friendly official, was wide and his literary activities related mostly to writing papers and making speeches about ancient Indian classics. It was believed that the posting of such a popular official at Nasik, the seat of political trouble, would prove very useful. He had, however, some time before his murder, been popularly

accused of an unjust conviction of an Indian. Consequently Savarkar's friends in Nasik conceived the design of retribution.

For this purpose their choice fell upon a young man by name Anant Kanhere. He was a resident of Aurangabad where he lived with his uncle and was receiving education in the local arts school. His old father, a pensioner, had retired to his original village and this young boy was thrown very much on his own resources. He was about 18 years of age, not very tall or strong looking but he was a most handsome youth, fond of dressing well and devoted to singing, music, and other gay pursuits. He was, however, reputed to be most daring, with no regard for his life. He had met me a few years before the incident mentioned here and was anxious to join military service. When I asked him what proof he could give at that early age of his capacity for military service, he gave me a striking indication of his daring and I thought on that occasion that provided with fitting opportunities of military service, which were not then open to Indians, he would prove a valuable asset in the service of his country.

The daring spirits at Nasik selected him for getting rid of Jackson. Local history provided evidence that the preparations for murdering Jackson were very astutely conceived and carried out with the utmost secrecy. The time selected for the deed was an occasion when Jackson, out of his fondness for Marathi plays, would be attending a Theatre to witness a popular Marathi play called "Sharada". Kanhere, with his confederates, watched for the proper opportunity and on 23 December 1909, shot Jackson several times until he fell dead. After lodging a few bullets in Jackson's body, Kanhere tried to shoot himself but he was stopped. He had another revolver in his pocket but he was prevented from using it on himself.

After preliminary proceedings at Nasik, he was tried in the High Court of Bombay for murder and was later hanged on 9 April 1910.

I used to attend Kanhere's trial at the High Court and was struck with the fact that, while the trial was going on, this young man took no notice of it, asked no questions and answered none, being the whole time busy with something in his hand, unmindful of what was happening around him. When he was led into and out of the Court-room morning and evening, he appeared totally unconcerned. The British

writer, Chirol, in his *Indian Unrest* bears testimony to this characteristic unconcern. He happened to meet Kanhere when he was in jail, awaiting the gallows. Chirol writes:

I happened, when at Nasik, to see the latter [Kanhere] while he was performing his ablutions in front of the Government building in which he was confined. Four policemen were in charge of him, but he seemed absolutely unconcerned; and after having washed himself leisurely, proceeded to discharge his devotions, looking around all the time with a certain self-satisfied composure before returning to his cell.

I watched Anant Kanhere every day during the trial in the High Court and felt, like many others, most impressed with the subdued courage and self-composure of this young man and we all felt, at the Bar, that it was a great pity that such a spirited and daring youth could find no other outlet for his patriotism than taking the life of a British official to avenge what he thought was an act of injustice. One of the European Judges who heard the case, and professed the usual official opinions about Indian politics, happened to meet me while the trial was going on. He walked up to me and said, "What do you think of Kanhere? I see you attending the Court every day," and then he went on to add what I thought was rather unusual for a British Judge to say. "What a pity that I have to send such a handsome and courageous youth to the gallows." Prompted by such candour, I observed that it was entirely the fault of the British policy that it denied such daring youths in India the opportunity to offer their lives at the altar of patriotic service, except through illegal acts. I related to the Judge the talk I previously had with Kanhere when he had sought an opportunity to enter high military service, and I added that, on finding this impossible, he turned to another avenue for the sacrifice of his life, as he thought, in the interest of his country. The Judge made no answer but one could see he was moved when he later sentenced Kanhere to death.

I was present in the Court when the sentence was pronounced. Kanhere stood stern and mute and when the police proceeded to handcuff him before leading him out of Court, he raised his hand in a minatory gesture, indicating that it was not necessary and he firmly walked out with the Police to enter the prison van. This trial caused a great sensation in the High Court and the Bar was, for several days, full of

criticism of the policy which drove such young men to the gallows.

We lost sight of Kanhere when he was in jail but we heard later that, by his courage and charm of manner, he won the admiration of the jail officials, and that on the early morning when he was to be taken to the gallows, he had to be roused from deep slumber. Thus ended the story of Anant Kanhere's life.

During this interval of ten years, my contact with legal life had increased. To mention only a few facts: I was appointed a Professor of Law at the Government Law School in Bombay. I lectured on Hindu Law and continued to occupy this post up to the end of 1912, when I resigned it, because, owing to the action of two Indian High Court Judges on the relevant Committee, I was unjustly superseded by a junior Englishman in the post of the Principal. That was my first occasion for asserting Indian self-respect and honour. Unfortunately my letter of resignation has been inadvertently lost, otherwise I should have liked to place it before the public as it contained many sentiments of public importance, for instance, that a Professor of Law ought to teach his pupils, apart from legal principles, the inestimable virtues of courage, independence, integrity, suavity of manners, respect for his opponent, which qualities make more for success than mere knowledge of law or skilfulness of advocacy.

Gokhale and Mahadeo Choubal, both good friends, made efforts to induce me to withdraw my resignation and Chief Justice Scott joined in those efforts. But, as my resignation was in assertion of Indian self-respect, its withdrawal was not possible. During these six years at the Law School my contact with my pupils increased in cordiality. I often meet, even now, senior pleaders who testify to the good time they had in the Law School during my regime. One advantage of this Professorship was that I came into intimate contact with the eminent lawyer, Dinshaw Mulla, who had been Principal in my time. He was then preparing the first edition of his popular treatise on Hindu Law. I gave him my best help and we worked together on the Chapter on *Stridhan*, which subject had always been regarded as the most intricate part of Hindu Law. The eminent author adverted to the peculiar difficulties of *Stridhan* and, in that connection, made a graceful reference to my help in the following passage in the Preface:

Of all the topics of Hindu Law there is none more intricate than that of woman's peculium, technically called *Stridhan*. An adequate treatment of it required a careful study of the original texts and I have attempted, with the assistance of my friend, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Barrister-at-Law, who holds a high repute in this Presidency for his profound knowledge of Sanskrit and of Hindu Law, to dispel the cloud of obscurity hanging round it, and to place it in a clear cut form before the reader.

In the course of legal practice, I had contact, as retained counsel, with the famous Hindu shrines of Pandharpur in the Deccan and Dakore in Gujerat. Later, I held the brief for the two shrines of the famous *Swami Narayan* sect at Vadtal and Ahmedbad in Gujerat and also for some religious places of the well-known *Mahanubhava* sect in the Deccan.

A careful study of the literature relating to the origin, foundation, growth and deterioration of these great institutions revealed how they were the outcome of generous benefactions by men of great piety and benevolence, how these institutions evoke, even in modern times, the religious faith of the countryside to acts of piety, suffering and sacrifice, how the priesthood, in course of time, descended from the high ideals of service and lapsed into indolence, intolerance, avarice, unbelief and even luxury, trading upon the credulity of the peasant and the cultivator of the land, how the rulers of the day had to intervene again and again to make laws for the proper administration of these charities, how, owing to the intervention of the State, conflict increased between the priest and the devotee, leading to expensive and wasteful litigation in courts of law. In one temple at Pandharpur, for instance, there were a dozen subordinate deities surrounding the main idol and more than a dozen orders of priests, each making rival claims to one or more of these deities, leading by a confusing process of permutation and combination to endless litigation.

As counsel, it was often a part of my duty to place proper advice at the disposal of the priesthood to check their aggression and greed. I am glad to say that, in many cases, I succeeded in regulating their management so as to bring it into accord with the original purpose of the foundation and the changing conditions of its utility to the public.

My experience also as counsel for Indian States increased during this decade. Visits were often necessary to the judicial

tribunals of these Indian States. What made these visits interesting in those younger days was their contrast with the strict methods and majestic surroundings of the Bombay High Court. Legal life was less strenuous there than in Bombay, more pleasant, more informal. Such visits often provided a good change from Bombay and I would have long continued them but for a circumstance, which I think is worth recording as showing how royal rule in some of these States extended over judicial administration.

On one occasion, I visited a State Court to defend an Inamdar against a charge of murder. The Bench was of three Judges, consisting of the Chief Minister (Diwan), the Chief Justice of the State and the Revenue Member. At the end of a busy day in the Court, I received an invitation from the Ruler to tea. I found him in surprising surroundings. Though personally cordial and almost affectionate, he revealed some uncommon features of his daily life. The conversation I had then with him is recorded in my diary as follows:

"Well, Barrister Sahab, how long are you going to be engaged in this case?" I replied, "Your Highness, not more than a week or ten days." "Is that all?" "I think so." "And what do you expect to be the result?" "I think I will get my client off." Then His Highness, with the most agreeable coolness, remarked, "Oh, please do not worry I have asked the Judges to continue the case for over a month in order that you may be able to put a good round sum into your pocket and I have also asked them to acquit the accused at the end of a month's trial."

I had no doubt that in saying this His Highness meant to be extremely kind to me but I was then so entirely unaccustomed to such intervention by the Ruler with the judicial tribunals of his State that I received a rude shock and, next day, pleading the excuse to the Court of some work in Bombay, I returned to Bombay. This experience, however, was by no means confined to this State but was more or less repeated in most Indian States. It must however be admitted that matters improved considerably with the advance of time and with the larger employment in State service of younger and trained men. A couple of States however in the Deccan and in Gujerat had always been free from such interference.

A Fellowship of the University of Bombay came to me during this time and I held that position for nearly ten years.

It was in this connection that I came into contact, for the first time, with the great Pherozeshah Mehta. In a previous Chapter, I referred to his great quality, somewhat rare in the leaders of my time and which he shared with three other leaders—Ranade, Tilak and lastly Gandhi—I mean the great quality of attracting young men to their work by the force of their personal charm and confidence, without a touch of condescension. After a speech of mine at the Senate which Pherozeshah thought was good, he walked up to me and inquired how I was related to my grandfather, whom he knew well. On my replying, he asked me, in a very pleasant tone, why I did not sometimes visit his Chamber opposite the High Court. He said this with such a grace and charm that I agreed to do so but I added jocularly that I was afraid of visiting his Chamber for I had heard of his reputation for swallowing up the young men who attended his chamber frequently. He smiled and replied, "I won't do that in your case, do not be afraid." But this gave rise to a relationship which, though I did not frequently avail myself of it, presented a strong contrast to the treatment offered to young men by his successor Wacha, the details of which I have mentioned in the previous pages of this narrative.

My studies in my favourite branch of Indian philosophy known as *Purva Mimansa*, also belong to this period. They were continued over nearly twelve years under the guidance of an eminent philosopher of Maharashtra, who taught me the abstruse and recondite principles of this branch of philosophy. These studies were intended by my grandfather as an antidote against extreme westernization, to which, he thought, a young man with admiration for the English language and literature and contacts with friends in England would be liable. In connection with these studies I had the opportunity of noting and rehearsing the whole procedure relating to large sacrificial ceremonials (*Yadnas*), so well-known in the ritualistic age of ancient India. Many of my grandfather's friends doubted the wisdom of putting me, at my age, through such conservative studies and discipline, but he never wavered from his conviction that these studies would prove beneficial in enabling me, in later life, to maintain a proper balance between Eastern and Western influences.

This period witnessed likewise intense activity in Bombay in various directions, educational, social, political and literary.

I had my full share of them. Speaking of educational efforts, I had the opportunity of helping in preparing a scheme for a public school in Bombay called Chanda Ramji High School for girls which was brought into existence by the efforts of a prominent and liberal-minded solicitor of Bombay, Nanu Narayan Kothare. He had very rich and influential clients and he persuaded one of them, a Gujerati millionaire of the name of Chanda Ramji, to devote a large share of his fortune to the foundation of a public school for girls, instead of expending it, as he had wanted to do, on a conservative religious endowment. Nanu obtained the necessary sanction of the High Court for this purpose and asked me to prepare a scheme for the school, which I did after several consultations with him. Ultimately, on 12 April 1907, the school was formally opened and has since been working as a very prosperous public school for Hindu girls in Bombay.

Another effort in the educational line was by the late Shantaram Narayan Dabholkar, descendant of an ancient Saraswat Brahman family who had settled in Bombay for many years. He desired to donate a part of his large fortune to the educational relief of needy Saraswat Brahman students. I prepared, at his request, a scheme which is operative, I understand, at the present date, notwithstanding the disintegration of that ancient family in course of time. Their beautiful family residence at Gamdevi was eventually sold and is now the home of K. M. Munshi's Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

The social activities in Bombay in these days led to the concentration of a strong effort to remove the communal taint from Hindu social life. Another prominent solicitor, K. R. Daftary, the father of the present Solicitor-General, who held very advanced views on social questions, started an institution called Aryan Brotherhood for promoting free social contact amongst the several castes. Under its auspices were held frequent dinners, social gatherings and parties, intended to bring the Hindus together and to remove communal differences by frequent social contact.

Narayan Chandavarkar was a prominent figure in this movement and for a number of years this institution helped Bombay to attain a high stage of non-communal friendliness which continued up to the time when the founder Daftary died.

Frequent gatherings were held, and on 18 December 1909,

this effort of social awakening culminated in the convening of what was called the Inter-Club Social Gathering, at which function most of the clubs which carried on similar activities in and out of Bombay met for the purpose of exchanging ideas and taking common action. Such social contacts increased enormously and ultimately they culminated in the convening in Bombay of a social conference in the April of 1912. Most of the social reformers in Bombay and many from outside attended this gathering and important resolutions, calculated to knit the Hindu community as a compact unit of Bombay Society, were proposed and supported by eminent men.

The need for public lectures revived under the stress of these requirements, and I advocated the need for inter-communal friendships at school and college, the absence of which was a noticeable feature of college life in those days. In 1912, I proclaimed this message in a speech at the Fergusson College in Poona on an invitation from its then Principal, R. P. Paranjapye (now Sir Raghunath Paranjapye). There I spoke of the need of such friendships to push forward the bounds of our knowledge and tolerance to cover the entire Indian community—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians, and the rest, who would eventually form the great Indian Nation. The speech received a very friendly response, leading to invitations from several other colleges in Bombay and outside.

Similar opportunities of inter-collegiate amity were at this time provided by a prosperous institution called The Bombay Students Brotherhood. Its main object was to bring together the students of all communities in Bombay for the purpose of increasing social and literary contacts. For a long time this institution had a very energetic Secretary, B. S. Turkhud. A large number of Parsi students and a sprinkling of Muslims took part in the activities of the institution. Such activities were for a long time carried on under the direction of Narayan Chandavarkar. Lectures were delivered by prominent speakers. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was one of the popular and attractive speakers of the time. The Brotherhood carefully avoided controversial politics, because on its list stood men whose political views differed. Amongst political leaders who joined, was Jinnah, whose social views were in advance of his community. It appears from one of the Brotherhood's reports that Chagla, the present Chief Justice of Bombay, was

gradually acquiring a well-deserved reputation for views not usually current amongst the members of his community. Lotwala, the Gujarati leader of pronounced Socialist views, also took part in the work of this institution. There was a fund for giving help to 'suffering humanity' as it was called, and the activities of this fund reached as far as Bengal and Sind and help used to proceed from time to time to people who suffered from cataclysms of nature. In one of my speeches, as President at a lecture of Mrs. Naidu the report records that I paid a glowing tribute to her manifold qualities and looked forward to the day when she would cross the seas to be an ambassador of a free and independent India.

For a long time, this institution stood in the forefront of students' activities and had received the support and guidance of many eminent men connected with school and college education, e.g. Dr. Scott, a popular Professor of Wilson College; Narayan Welinkar, an educationist, who, at that time, was conducting a public school in Bombay; P. A. Wadia, who fortunately is still amongst us; and Mirza, later a Judge of the Bombay High Court. There was a Sunday Class at which I delivered lectures on English and Sanskrit literature, including one on the 'Heroines of *Bhavabhuti* and *Kalidas*'.

Later the activities of this institution reached a climax when Gandhi's birthday was celebrated and among the speakers on that occasion were B. G. Kher and Jamnadas Dwarkadas, the latter being a prominent figure in those days in Bombay's public life. A committee was appointed to propagate the cause of Swadeshi by conducting a *bazaar* for that purpose. At the *bazaar* a large sum was collected which was utilised for spreading the gospel of Swadeshi, a portion being devoted to a Hospital which was then started in Bombay.

Unfortunately, at a later stage, the institution fell under the spell of extreme political views in the advancing tide of the non-co-operation movement. I had then to send in my resignation. Another person professing extreme political views became the President in my place and gradually, as the institution ignored more and more the main principle of its foundation, viz. abstention from controversial politics, it deteriorated during the non-co-operation movement and ultimately disappeared. Even its traces have now been lost and its workers later joined different institutions. It was most

unfortunate that no other institution came to take its place in the students' life of Bombay.

With equal popularity was conducted a Society called the Students Literary and Scientific Society. The history of this institution, which was founded a hundred years ago, should be full of interest and valuable lessons for the supporters of women's education. The advance of this education has been so rapid and extensive during recent times that the present generation is likely to be ignorant of the obstacles which stood in the way of the pioneers who, a century ago, sought to free Indian women from the thralldom of ignorance and social customs which stood in the way of their uplift. Thus the history of this Society is the chequered history of women's education in the city of Bombay during the last one hundred years.

Towards the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, long before the foundation of the Bombay University, a band of young men, called "Normal Scholars" of what was then known as the Elphinstone Institute (in a sense the predecessor of the present Elphinstone College of Bombay) took upon themselves the onerous task of developing the intellectual and moral side of the residents of Bombay. They were fired with the noble desire of chasing away the evil of illiteracy, then so notoriously rampant. The names that stand out most prominently among these enthusiastic workers are those of Dadabhai Naoroji, Narayan Dinanath Velkar, Ardeshir F. Moos, Bhaskar D. Palande and last but not the least, Jagannath Shankarseth and Bhau Daji.

The current of opinion in those early days relating to what was then called 'English Education' was adverse, and grave doubts about its utility were expressed in the highest quarters. For instance, the *Bombay Times* (predecessor of the present *Times of India*) teemed with articles deploring the "useless system of education, which, by bribing [students] with scholarships to continue at college after they had learnt all that they wanted (viz. the qualifications necessary for a writing clerk), was giving an artificial stimulus to the formation of a class of men that were not wanted." But, beneath this hostile surface, considerable earnestness in academic circles existed to sow the seeds of knowledge in a rich and virgin soil. This desire had the active sympathy and co-operation of distinguished educationists, two of whom might with advantage be

mentioned—Prof. Joseph Patton and Prof. Richard T. Reid.

As a result of their efforts which passed through several vicissitudes, on 13 June 1848, the Students' Literary and Scientific Society was founded with 24 original members. Amongst these, 2 were Englishmen, 13 Parsees, including Dadabhai Naoroji, 5 Maharashtrians and 2 Gujaratis. The objects contemplated in founding this Society were (as stated in the phraseology current in those times), "To foster healthy tone of mind by insisting that indolence and apathy lead only to moral suicide and by placing in a clear light the sure results of self-reliance, the steady progress of self-advancement and the golden crown of self-respect, to hold forth the torch of hope and to kindle the flame of generous enthusiasm at the high altar of duty."

This Society for some time engaged itself in reading essays, literary, scientific and social. Political and religious controversies were excluded. In September 1848, two vernacular branches were organized under the appellation of *Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Sabha* for the benefit of Marathi-speaking Hindus and *Gujerati Dnyan Prasarak Sabha* for Parsees, whose mother-tongue was Gujarati. The object to be achieved by their foundation was to "promote the diffusion of knowledge among the uneducated masses by the reading and discussion of essays on literary, historical and social subjects." Subsequently a third Sabha was started called *Buddhi Vardhak Hindu Sabha* for Gujarati Hindus and under its auspices a school was opened in June 1851, specially designed for the instruction of Gujarati girls who were till then excluded from the influence of European civilization and modes of thought. These schools were maintained mostly by charitable donations and gradually the desire grew to teach not only reading and writing, but "in addition to give such education as would have an influence on the whole character of the student."

By this time the subject of female education had excited considerable public attention. Numerous essays had been read and discussed on the social condition of women in India. The subject was taken up by newspapers, both English and Indian. The Government of the day regarded the establishment of girls' schools "as an epoch in the history of education at the Bombay Presidency from which, it is to be hoped, will, in due time, be traced the commencement of a rapid, marked and constant progress." In 1856, the Hon'ble Court of Directors

in London in their Despatch to the Bombay Government observed: "We regard with special interest the efforts made by the Students' Literary and Scientific Society for the improvement of their countrymen and countrywomen."

The first public-spirited citizen who came to the rescue of this work was the (Hon'ble Mr.) Jagannath Shankarseeth (popularly called Nana Shankarseeth), for many years a member of the Board of Education. The history of the progressive movement of that age shows that he was a zealous pioneer of nearly every effort to spread knowledge and enlightenment amongst his countrymen. For instance, as early as 1825, he headed a small band of Indians in demanding and ultimately obtaining the establishment of an English Institution in Bombay called Elphinstone Institute (predecessor of Elphinstone High School and Elphinstone College of later days) which it was hoped might in a remoter future prove the forerunner of colleges for European science with Indian Professors under European supervision. Again in 1852, he was equally active in the region of legal education. He presided at a meeting which succeeded in establishing a professorship of jurisprudence at the Elphinstone Institute, designated the "Perry Professorship of Jurisprudence" in grateful memory of Sir Erskine Perry, the Chief Justice of the then Supreme Court in Bombay. Eventually, Dr. Reid, a barrister practising in Bombay, was appointed Professor. He can thus be regarded as the first professor of what eventually became the Government Law School and later the Government Law College of Bombay.

For the benefit of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, Jagannath Shankarseeth gave a pretty little cottage in his own garden at Girgaum Road to be used rent free as a school house, an example subsequently followed by others. Several Parsee donors came out with their gifts and with their help the schools conducted by the *Gujerathi Dnyan Prasarak Mandali* prospered from year to year. In course of time, through the help of Bhau Daji, another public leader of Bombay, a savant and an antiquarian of repute, another set of schools was started which went after his name. These two sets of schools worked side by side for many years in the different localities in Bombay. Other schools were opened in different parts of the city of Bombay and eventually these schools were amalgamated and in the year 1878 they were

brought under the management of Trustees working under a formal Trust Deed. In 1883, the prohibition, which till then existed against girls of more than 12 years of age attending schools, was removed and a full-fledged Anglo-Vernacular school for girls was set up. About this time, the late (Justice) Telang was the Secretary of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and eventually a public-spirited worker, the late Gajanan Bhaskar Vaidya, took up the management. He collected donations. My grandfather contributed a handsome amount. With the help of these donations, and of Municipal and Government grants, a commodious and beautiful building was built in the populous Girgaum area, where the school has existed for several years. After Vaidya's death, his wife Kamalabai, a former pupil of the Society's school, took up the management. In the year 1948, the Society held a Centenary celebration with great pomp. The work of the Society and its schools has been conducted by a Committee of Management, of which I was the President for 14 years. The Society is a very popular public institution in Bombay and continues the tradition of its founders of a century ago.

Another school founded about the same time as the Society, is the Prabhu Seminary. It was started and maintained by the charitable donations of the members of the Pathare Prabhu community but it has always been open to the entire Hindu community. It occupied a prominent place in Bombay at one time. Having regard to its early date, it was a very creditable non-caste attempt, showing, as in the case of many Parsee charities of the time, that the public benefactions of that period were known for their non-sectarian spirit. This school is still going on. The teaching there is often offered through voluntary agencies of undergraduates and graduates, mostly supplied by the young men of the Pathare Prabhu community. In my undergraduate days I was one such honorary teacher for a few years.

In addition to his educational activities mentioned in previous pages, Jagannath Shankarseth held advanced views in social matters also and had derived many of his notions from British conceptions of dignity and culture. For his own occupation, he built a large house on the Girgaum Road like the manor house of a country squire in England and surrounded it with a large garden like an English park, stocked with deer and other animals. For years, he maintained this

manor house and the park with expensive pomp and dignity and it served the residents of the Girgaum Road as an open space. Both garden and house were used for holding public and private functions.

Nana's statue appears at the entrance hall of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in the Bombay Town Hall and those who knew him were of opinion that, that statue was not much of an exaggeration of the size and dignity of the original. Nana had the reputation of being a very courageous and independent citizen and it was entirely due to his good offices that the Hindus were able to retain a cremation ground at such a convenient site as Queen's Road. That road was then the usual thoroughfare by which European officials and their womenfolk reached Malabar Hill from the business quarter called the Fort. That Hill, in those days, was inhabited mostly by European residents. An agitation was set up in course of time by the European residents against the continuance of the cremation ground on Queen's Road on the plea that very often the flames of the cremation were visible from the road. It was, therefore, most strongly urged that the cremation ground should be removed to the distant and inconvenient quarter of Sewri. After all attempts had failed to stop this proposed removal, Bombay was led into an agitation by Nana, which can be said to be the forerunner of the methods which Gandhi brought later into vogue. Nana gathered together the Kolis (fishermen) of Bombay, explained to them the threatened removal and the consequent inconvenience, and asked their aid in placing the grievance before the Governor. Nana's house was opposite my grandfather's, and I have heard from his lips and of other residents of that locality that, Nana one morning gathered together about 1500 fishermen, who all came to the meeting with their oars in their hands. Nana rode on horseback at the head of this large 'army', which proceeded on foot from Girgaum to the Government House which was then at Parel. It is said that the Governor of Bombay, who had very nearly sanctioned the removal of the cremation ground to Sewri, was standing at his window in the forenoon, when he saw from a distance a large 'army', marching towards his residence raising a cloud of dust. He sent his Secretary to inquire what the matter was, and on being informed that the popular leader Nana was at the head of this procession, he sent for him and on learning

how the grievance had been acutely felt by the Hindu community, he dropped the idea of the removal. It was a singular incident, even in those early days, showing how popular forces regulated by discreet leadership achieve success.

For this great service to the Hindu community, a small bust of Nana was installed at the cremation ground and is still to be found there.

In the following pages are set out a few facts showing how these two great Bombay leaders, Bhau Daji and Nana Shankarseth, in addition to what they achieved in the educational field, were the pioneers of organized political work in Bombay. There is a mistaken belief in some quarters that political agitation in Western India took its rise from the activities of Poona leaders. This belief has gained currency. A recent attempt to prove the error of this view and to place before the public the early political services of these two and other Bombay leaders, many of whom were Parsees, is to be found in a recent publication by a Poona Scholar, J. J. Jambhekar, of the record of the life of Bal Shastri Jambhekar, one of the pioneer social and political reformers of Bombay. In that book, the author has collected abundant facts showing how the beginning of organized political work in Western India was undertaken not by the leaders of Poona, but by the leading men of Bombay more than a century ago, when Poona had scarcely awakened to the need of organized political agitation.

Jagannath Shankarseth and Bhau Daji, with the help of Parsee and other friends, started an Association called The Bombay Association in the year 1852, more than a century ago. In starting this institution they took advantage of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Co. and of the fact that the explicit provisions in it, that race, creed or place of birth should not stand in the way of Indians attaining high administrative positions, had in practice remained a dead letter. It was pointed out that, contrary to this assurance, all high positions in judicial, revenue and other departments were monopolized by Britishers educated at the Haileybury College in England.

The first meeting of the Bombay Association was held at Elphinstone High School (then recently started) on 26 August 1852, at which leading personalities representing all communities and drawn from various walks of life were present. As an old historian of Bombay, G. N. Madgaokar, remarks, the

people at the time felt that the Association would develop into an Indian counterpart of the British Parliament. It is noteworthy that the first office-bearers of the Association included Jagannath Shankarseth, Sir Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy, Bhau Daji and Vinayak Jagannathji. The Association pursued most effective methods for attaining its objective and sent two petitions to the British Parliament during the very first year of its existence.

It is not possible to find place in this Chapter for the contents of these petitions, but I must quote the opinions of two important newspapers in England about this effort.

The London *Spectator*, of 8 January 1853, said:

The petition sent is not a long one, though it is full of matter. It is not querulous in the old Indian style, not rhetorical nor eloquent against "grievances" or "oppression". But it is remarkable for dealing with imperfections in the exciting state of Anglo-Indian Government in a plain matter-of-fact style and for offering practical suggestions rather to illustrate principles than to enforce dogmatic demands. Nothing could be more sensible.

Another paper, the *Leader*, in its issue of 15 January 1853, observed:

The people of Bombay, notwithstanding their diversities of race, are actually fitting themselves to receive, if not to extort, a due share of self-government under British Institutions, and now we find the natives of Bombay not begging, like spaniels at the feet of their masters, but conducting a political agitation with money and moderation like the middle-classes of Liverpool and Manchester.

These extracts will make clear the great services of these Bombay leaders in beginning political life in the city of Bombay. Thus, the foundations of an organized political movement in the Bombay Province were well and truly laid in Bombay. This Association was the predecessor of the Bombay Presidency Association, founded in 1885 by some of its younger members who were also the sponsors of the first session of the Indian National Congress held in Bombay in December 1885.

In the clamant din of the rival claims of cities and provinces, it is well to remember this almost forgotten landmark in the history of the freedom movement, started in Bombay for the benefit of the entire Province.

About this time Jinnah and myself got connected with the *Bombay Chronicle*, a paper which was started by Pherozeshah Mehta and which passed into other hands after his death on 5 November 1915. During that year India lost two prominent leaders. Gokhale died on 21 February 1915, and Pherozeshah Mehta's death followed nine months later. Bombay went into mourning after Pherozeshah's death and for a long time sorrow hovered over the city. Jinnah and myself remained connected with the *Bombay Chronicle* till a much later period. I may, however, mention here that in this work we were assisted by two leaders of the time—Umar Sobhani and Shankarlal Banker, who regarded it as a public duty to maintain this paper at the level which it occupied during Pherozeshah Mehta's time. In a later Chapter will be found the details of the misfortunes of this paper, in relieving which Jinnah and myself, assisted by other devoted friends, did much.

Bombay had come to acquire in those days the reputation of being the first city of political importance in Western India, if not in the whole country.

With more success came more courage and we gathered strength and turned our non-communal activities to institutions outside Bombay. The first occasion for our activity arose in the year 1909 in connexion with the Literary Conference (*Sāhitya Sammelan*) which was proposed to be held at Baroda in the October of that year. The usual practice up to that time had been to select as President a prominent literary man of the Brahmin community. But this time a few young men of Baroda, including G. S. Bhate, a brilliant graduate of Edinburgh University, conceived the idea of making a change from the usual routine by the appointment of a non-Brahmin literary man to be the President of the Conference. This proposal found support in Baroda owing to His Highness Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad's enlightened influence there. Baroda was then known for its progressive ideas, sedulously fostered by the Maharaja, who had slowly collected around himself young men amongst whom were the late Maulana Mahomed Ali, G. S. Bhate and C. Ramalinga Reddi, a brilliant graduate of Cambridge. Previous to these times the Maharaja had drawn into his State Aurobindo Ghosh. C. R. Reddi later acquired great renown in an administrative post in Mysore and later as Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University. There was a brilliant American graduate included in this group named

Whitenack. These young men formed an assertive social unit which spread liberal notions under the silent inspiration of His Highness, improving thereby the tone not only of the administration but of popular sentiment in the State.

His Highness gave his best help to the literary conference and ultimately was installed as President a modest literary figure, K. R. Kirtikar, a member of the Indian Medical Service. He combined literary studies with scientific research and was regarded as an authority on botanical questions. Simultaneously, he pursued his literary studies in Marathi and had to his credit several works of great merit, of which a Marathi translation of Tennyson's *Princess* had won considerable popularity.

The Conference met at Baroda on *Vijayadashmi* (Dassera) day of 1909 and was a very popular venture of the literary men drawn from the Marathi speaking areas of Bombay, Central Provinces and the South. Very prominent scholars attended, amongst whom was R. G. Bhandarkar, the famous orientalist, and the well-known Marathi scholars Khadilkar, C. V. Vaidya, V. G. Apte, N. M. Tilak, Pangarkar and Ajgaonkar. V. P. Madhav Rao, of Maharashtrian origin (later settled in the South), who held the post of Prime Minister of Baroda, also attended.

The inaugural speech was delivered by His Highness' brother, Sampatrao Gaekwad. The President, Dr. Kirtikar, then delivered his speech, noted for its grace, wealth of information and research, partly composed in the *ovi* metre (which serves in Marathi the same purpose as blank verse in English). He met the accusation, often urged against the Marathi language by its critics, that it was only an offspring of the Sanskrit language and consequently could make no claim to independent linguistic existence. The President refuted this charge and pointed out, by a reference to several instances, that though historically Marathi, like many other Indian provincial languages, was descended from Sanskrit, the offspring had, in many branches of human knowledge, excelled the achievements of its parent and that the labours of several scholars from very ancient times had invested the Marathi language with a status comparable with the dignity, richness and universality of Sanskrit and that, at the date of the Baroda Conference, Marathi had reached a position indicated in the following quotation from the work of a reputed

British admirer of the Marathi language:

Marathi is a copious and beautiful language. If we were to institute a parallel with Hindi in this respect, we might appropriately describe Hindi as the English and Marathi as the German of the Indian group, Hindi having set aside whatever could be dispensed with, Marathi having retained whatever has been spared by the action of time. To an Englishman, Hindi commends itself by the absence of form and the positional structure of sentences, resulting therefrom; to our high German cousins, Marathi, with its fuller array of genders, terminations and inflections, would probably seem the completer and finer language.

Several resolutions were passed on the occasion. The most important Resolution contained a recommendation to the University of Bombay that Marathi should be made a subject of study from the Matriculation up to the M. A. in the Arts course and also made a medium of instruction and examinations. This resolution was moved by the reputed scholar, C. V. Vaidya, who in his speech traced the history of the Marathi language from ancient times. Another resolution was a recommendation to Marathi scholars and the Government that the time had come to collect and preserve all the historical material relating to the growth of Marathi. The famous orientalist R. G. Bhandarkar made a speech on this resolution which contained a caveat to historians that truth must be their object and not provincial or national pride.

A very interesting debate took place on the question as to what influence Marathi had upon the literature and the social habits of the people. Many speakers pointed out that one such effect upon social behaviour was the removal of communal or social distinctions, and that the writings of the Maratha Saints had lost no opportunity of condemning religious intolerance, bigotry or exclusiveness. Likewise the Marathi writings of Muslim authors and Saints had carried this message of religious tolerance throughout Maharashtra. Another important debate and resolution related to research into the ancient relics in Maharashtra and Prime Minister Madhav-rao of Baroda made a very encouraging speech with his authority as Prime Minister, in which he stated his views about the spread and dignity of the Marathi language in the following words:

It is not Maharashtra proper alone which is interested in the culti-

vation of the Marathi language. Many colonies of Marathi-speaking people followed Shahaji and Venkoji in their conquest and settled in parts of Mysore and in Tanjore. It will not be an exaggeration to say that, even in many villages in the South, there will be found a few Marathi-speaking people. Marathi was of course the Court language in the small kingdom of Tanjore up to the middle of the last century. It was the language of the Court and diplomacy in Mysore in the earlier years of the last century. His Highness the penultimate Maharaja of Mysore, who died in 1868, was an accomplished Marathi scholar and many of his *Nirups* are in Marathi. In some of the British Districts in the Madras Presidency and even in the Board of Revenue, if I am not mistaken, there was a Marathi *Duffar* up to the middle of the last century.

In Travancore also, the Southernmost State in India, the Marathi language was introduced in the court of one of the Maharajas and the late and the penultimate Maharajas were good Marathi scholars. A knowledge of Marathi up to a very recent date was a mark of culture and refinement.

But with the Marathi language, as in the case of the Maratha Empire, it is now a case of arrested development and the more powerful English language has taken its place. But the arrest and the development, so far as the language is concerned, can only be in regard to its extension and has not affected its cultivation and improvement, as is evident from the lively interest shown by this Conference, for one thing, in the advancement of Marathi literature. As I said before, anything done to improve the language cannot but be of supreme interest not only to Maharashtra proper but to its outlying colonies in the South as well.

One of the speakers, in indicating how some fanatical Muslim authorities had harmed the Marathi language, mentioned an instance of a Saraswati *mandir* established by King Bhoja. The walls of this *mandir* were of stone slabs on which were inscribed, in beautiful characters, many Sanskrit and Prakrit texts. During the days of the Muslim rulers, this *mandir* was turned into a mosque, the excellent inscriptions on the stone slabs were scored out and the slabs themselves were used for paving the floor. But, fortunately, the workmen put the slabs with the inscription side upwards instead of the blank side, with the result that later scholars could make use of the inscriptions in the few cases in which they were readable in spite of the scoring.

The last and the most important resolution related to the formation of a constitution for such Conferences. One object as mentioned in that Constitution was "to increase the study

of the Marathi language and literature by various means and to popularize its extent and improvement."

Their Highnesses were present throughout the important debates and in the Maharaja's closing speech, on behalf of his State, he promised to give best encouragement to the growth and improvement of the Marathi language, but he sounded a caution that increase in the status of the Marathi language must not lead to the lowering of the prestige of Sanskrit and that all the efforts of scholars must be guided by this caution. Towards the end of his speech he announced that his State would endeavour to carry on its educational effort by the use of the Provincial language, whatever universities might do or not do. This announcement closed the Conference with great joy and it was felt that the efforts of the promoters had succeeded beyond expectations. The Conference lasted from 23 to 29 October 1909.

Within a month of the Baroda Literary Conference, my friends and myself, emboldened by our success at Baroda, found an opportunity to push forward our non-sectarian ideas in connexion with the celebration in Bombay of an Arts and Crafts Exhibition of the Pathare Prabhu community. For several weeks, the idea of holding such an exhibition had been before the leaders of the community. Such an exhibition had not been held in the past and it was thought that the talent of the women of the community, inherited from the days of their former affluence, required to be made more popular.

Great interest, therefore, was attached to the holding of this exhibition, especially amongst the women of the community, who thought that it would be a very good opportunity for the exercise of their artistic tastes and talent. We, therefore, conceived the idea of asking Gokhale to preside at this function, the idea being that by his presence a greater publicity would be given and a leader of his eminence made aware of what the Prabhus have been doing since ancient times. The idea received some opposition from the conservative section. But ultimately Gokhale presided at the function.

The Exhibition was held on 28 November 1909, at the Chanda Ramji Girls' High School in Bombay. Four to five months were spent on preparing the exhibits which amounted to 1,600 in number. A separate department was created where the art of Prabhu girls had an exclusive

opportunity of publicity. Gokhale confessed his ignorance of art, which was a drawback which he shared with many other leaders of the time. He however went on to observe that for centuries we Hindus had been taught the gospel that life was a burden full of grief and sorrow, to be lived through somehow or other. Not much effort had been made, he observed, as in other countries, for spreading the cult of art as contributing to make life more pleasant, comprehensive and worth living, by the exercise of the artistic talent as the most judicious means of mitigating sorrow and misery. He dilated on the value of such exhibitions, harping upon the talent displayed at it.

The Exhibition used to be kept open for women and children in the afternoon. Forty women volunteers with my mother at their head regulated the entry and from six to ten other persons were admitted and 150 volunteers guided them through the several exhibits. It was kept open for more than a fortnight during which time a large number of distinguished visitors attended.

Thus the third attempt to introduce non-sectarian impulses into occasions so far confined purely to caste purposes succeeded beyond our expectations. The one great effect of the exhibition was to put a stop to the rapid decline of Prabhu art.

Bombay celebrated the 13th Session of the Indian National Congress from 27 to 29 December. There was a great ovation on the arrival of Sir S. P. Sinha, as he then was, as President, Wacha was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The selection of Sinha as President was suggested by Pheroze Shah Mehta, who desired that on this occasion the honour should be conferred on an Indian, who not only belonged to the Congress but had the advantage of being admitted into the arcana of the Government of India and whose Presidential pronouncement would consequently compel attention and command respect in quarters in which alone rested the power to grant us the reforms which we demanded.

Great was the enthusiasm of the delegates and large numbers of visitors attended the sittings of the Congress for three successive days. The total number of delegates who attended the Session was 2,259—a number far in excess of that registered at any previous session of the Congress.

Owing to the experiences at Surat, the Constitution of the

Congress, since framed, had invested only affiliated or recognised electorates with the right to return delegates to the Congress. Since then, each Province had been passing through the constructive stage of electoral organization; and the holding of the Bombay session of the Congress accelerated the progress of the Province in which it was held. During the previous eight years, a great deal of steady progress had been made in the direction of organizing Congress Committces in the different Provinces, so that a network of organizations had been spread throughout the country. The result was that the Congress had acquired a great hold on people of diverse occupations and callings and of various stations in life.

The All India Muslim League was to meet for the first time in the history of that body at Bombay about the same time as the Congress and the opportunity which this event afforded for camaraderie between Hindus and Muslims and for cordial co-operation between that body and the Indian National Congress for the promotion of their common political aspirations had attracted to Bombay a large number of members of both the Communities from the different Provinces. We younger men conceived the idea of drawing the two bodies together during their eventful sessions and we gradually attracted the support of the older men. Our efforts succeeded, and, for the first time in the history of the Congress, the representatives of the All India Muslim League attended the Congress session. They were allotted a conspicuous position in the Congress pandal in front of the Congress delegates and were received by the vast assemblage with hearty applause and cordiality as they entered the pandal and took their seats in the prominent places reserved for them.

Events during the past few years had gradually led up to a fraternal coalition on the part of the two bodies. Definite advance in that direction had been made by the All India Muslim League since 1912, which was responded to by the Indian National Congress in its sessions after that year and consequently the desire grew in both these bodies for fellowship and concerted action in all matters affecting the national welfare. In this year, the leaders of the Muslim League made up their minds to grasp the hand of comradeship which the Congress had been offering since 1913 and to take steps for concerted action by formulating a scheme of reforms calculated to secure for the people of India a substantial step forward

in the direction of self-government. We, the younger men, were very prominent in making successful this *entente* between the two bodies and, as the Congress official report said, "the effect of the two bodies holding their sessions in Bombay was especially noteworthy in the case of the rising generations of the educated youth of the Hindu-Muslim communities." A genuine feeling of brotherhood prevailed which manifested itself in various ways. The Congress Volunteers and the Muslim Volunteers arrived at a joint session and worked shoulder to shoulder. A joint dinner was organized by some of the younger men. As the Congress Report remarked, "it was a gratifying and inspiring sight to see the organizers wearing a brilliant badge which combined the Crescent with the Lotus, symbolizing the union of the two faiths in the service of their motherland and invoking the eye of the thinker to see therein the realization of Akbar's dream in the not distant future."

Great struggle took place between the younger men and the older generation to be elected to the Subjects Committee and my diary entry of 27 December reads:

Fight about my election to Subjects Committee. Setalwad, Samarth and others against younger men but ultimately I was elected with the help of the younger men along with Bahadurji, Bhulabhai Desai, Ibrahim Rahimtoola and Horniman.

It was a time of great rejoicing. The Bar gave a dinner to Sinha at the Parsi Ripon Club and the feeling prominent in the minds of most of us younger men was that the inauguration of this policy of joint and concerted action by the Congress and the Muslim League should be made a memorable feature of this session of the Congress and that it was in the fitness of things that this notable step should have been taken at the birth-place of the Congress movement, which was also the home of Badruddin Tyebji and Rahimtoola M. Sayani—the two great Muhammadan leaders of Bombay and Ex-Presidents of the Congress. They in their days had laboured to persuade their co-religionists all over the country to join hands with their countrymen and the Congress and contribute their share to the regeneration of the land of their birth as the children of one mother.

Wacha made a very inspiring speech on the 28th and gave prominent expression to the serious disappointment of the

Indian people that, in spite of their great desire, since the declaration of war, to go to the front and fight side by side with the soldiers in the regular Indian Army, Government had not given sufficient response. Wacha went on to say:

Even today thousands and thousands are willing and ready to take up arms in the great cause for which the Allies are fighting but, unfortunately, the permanent bureaucracy of the land have sternly, if politely, refused these applications, the why and wherefore of which have never been made known. It is this attitude of the Government, in the midst of the great tragic crisis, that has given the bitterest disappointment to which many a leading organ of public opinion has given full expression.

The President, Sinha, delivered a speech suited to the occasion expressing, in the clearest terms, from his high pedestal, the aspirations of the people. The speech produced a great effect and it is permissible to quote below a brief extract:

It seems to me, Brother Delegates, that the only satisfactory form of Self-Government to which India aspires cannot be anything short of what President Lincoln so pithily described as "Government of the people, for the people and by the people." By the "people" I do not mean a civil service composed entirely of Indians but I mean the people who live in villages and till the soil.

It is these people whom we want to take part in the Government of the country.

While we admit that the goal is not yet, we refuse to believe that it is so distant as to render it a mere vision of imagination.

Several resolutions in amplification of the demands briefly stated in the President's speech were moved. Quite a galaxy of speakers were chosen to speak and among them stand out prominently the names of leaders who later constituted the pivot of the country's activities in the Executive and the Legislative Councils and outside in the country at large. Certain amendments to the constitution of the Congress were accepted which were intended for the purpose of making the constitution more workable and to bring it into conformity with the changed conditions of the country since the original constitution had been framed. In the concluding speech of the President a tribute was paid to Bombay in the following words:

Gentlemen, you in Bombay founded the Congress. The Congress held its first sitting here and today ends its 30th and not the least memorable sitting. It has been again held in Bombay. Bombay has set the political vision and has been the leader of political thought in India, not only for the last 30 years but for all the time that there has been any political thought in British India. Long live Bombay!

The speech ended with an admonition in the following words:

It may be that some of you, who are younger in feeling, are sanguine enough to think that the work [before us] is easy and that it does not take long. I wish I could also think so. But I am afraid it does take long. Do not make the mistake that it is an easy task to accomplish. You have got to work and work day and night, patiently, persistently and strenuously, if you desire to achieve the object which you profess—Government of the people, for the people and by the people.

While the Congress session was being held rumours were not wanting that the proposed *entente* between the Congress and progressive Muslims had been viewed with suspicion and dislike by some reactionary and autocratic officials of the Bombay Government who were secretly planning, chiefly with the aid of Muslims from outside Bombay, the complete dispersion of the Session of the Muslim League which was proposed to be held at the conclusion of the Congress Session to obtain Muslim support for the demands made by the Congress in the resolutions of the session. These rumours grew wilder and wilder. Ultimately the promoters of the Muslim League session found it necessary, as a precautionary measure, to seek the help of the police officials of the Bombay Government to prevent what they thought was likely to be a violent and rowdy attack upon the Muslim League session. The police officials, it was rumoured, instead of agreeing to give help to protect the Muslim League session from outside attacks, agreed to interfere only on condition that, in the event of an outbreak of disturbances, they would proceed to disperse the entire session of the Muslim League, instead of checking the outsiders' interference with the proceedings. Ultimately the rumours proved to be true and on the fateful day when the Muslim League session was held under the Presidency of Mahzar-ul-Huq, Muslim hooligans, mostly outsiders, helped by some local reactionary Muslims, created a disturbance which necessitated an adjournment of the

session and thus the threat of the Police officials to disperse the entire Session was averted. The incident was regarded as a great catastrophe and was strongly resented by the Indian public and journals. The Anglo-Indian papers of Bombay of course preserved a show of lip sympathy and fairness, finding excuses for the occurrence.

What happened at the Session is best stated in the words of the *Mahratta* of Poona, 9 January 1910:

PASSPORT TO ROWDYISM

One of the most distressing features of the rowdyism staged fearlessly at the second day's meeting of the League was that the disresponsible hirelings of mischief stepped forward from the visitors' gallery, shamelessly interrupted all business and openly insulted the President, although they knew that a police force was near the spot to quell any such disturbance. But the climax was yet to come. For when Mr. Jinnah saw the Police Commissioner to ask his help to turn out the blatant interlopers who were neither respectable Mahomedans nor delegates nor members of the League, he (Mr. Jinnah) is said to have received a reply that it was none of the business of the police to expel the disorderly visitors, and, for the matter of that, the Police Commissioner would rather clear the whole pandal. The police of Bombay seems to entertain some very queer notions about breach of peace and peace-breakers. When police aid is invoked, the custodians of law and order would not take the trouble to single out the mischief-mongers but would straightway punish the guilty as well as the innocent by expulsion, and thus help indirectly to consummate the very end which the malefactors might have in view. The malcontents could not have in this instance dared iniquitously to obstruct the proceedings of the meeting under the nose, so to speak, of the police, unless the rowdies had felt emboldened by the inexplicable attitude of the police officials. Bazar rumours have found out an explanation not very complimentary to the police, but we attach no importance to such irresponsible reports. The fact, however, remains that the police not only failed to assist the members of the League in holding their adjourned session in the pandal, but, on the contrary, advised the promoters to abandon their legitimate project. This is nothing but bending the knee to hooliganism and tyranny; and if the impression gains ground that the police refuse their protection to law-abiding citizens in deference to mob law, they will be taken to have confessed their incompetence and partizanship. From such an undeserved stigma it is the duty of the police to save itself.

The attitude of the Anglo-Indian papers was best illustrated

by the following brief extract from the comments of the local Indian press:

This year the Congress just stopped short of the declaration of Home Rule as its goal of practical politics and hence the bureaucratic papers were jubilant and lauded Sir S. P. Sinha to the skies. The expectations formed of the Muslim League were on the other hand quite different. It is therefore quite in keeping with the policy of the Anti-Congress Anglo-Indian papers to have overwhelmed Mr. Huq with condemnation and reproof when the League which was formerly fondled in the hope that it might be a formidable antagonist of the Congress, was suddenly discovered as revealing the strongest pro-Indian instincts. Both Sir S. P. Sinha and Mr. Mazhar-ul-Huq did say almost the same thing about self-government and the Indian aspirations in that direction, but Sir Satyendra Sinha was patted on the shoulders because as a naughty boy he did not give very much trouble, and Mr. Huq has been severely reproved because as a docile boy he ought to have made no noise at all. In the case of Sir Satyendra Sinha our adversaries were agreeably surprised, while in Mr. Huq, they were woefully undeceived and hence, for the same or almost similar act, the Anglo-Indian papers have been cajoling and hectoring by turns.

In concluding this long chapter of events, I would like to mention in brief words the tragedy which overtook my family in the death of my grandfather on 16 August 1911, after two weeks' illness. During this period several eminent visitors called to see him as his circle of friends was very wide in Bombay, the Deccan and Gujerat. He expired at midnight on the 16th. His death cast a gloom over my family which we took a long time to get over. A brief reference to him in connexion with my early life has been made in an earlier Chapter; but during his long career at the Bar extending over nearly 45 years, he had endeared himself to his colleagues and to the Bench by his great kindliness, integrity, urbanity and courtesy of behaviour. The Bar regarded him as the father of the profession and after the death of his contemporaries he became the solitary remnant of the past age, with ideals, traditions and practices which were fast giving way to new methods. Sir Lawrence Jenkins, the popular Chief Justice of Bombay, once described him as the "pink of courtesy and urbanity". One instance of his kindliness of heart has been recorded in the autobiography of Chimanlal Setalwad in the following words:

When I was enrolled as a pleader on the Appellate Side of the High Court in February 1887, I did not know any of the pleaders then practising except Vasudeo Jagannath Kirtikar, whom my father knew and to whom he had given me a letter of introduction. When I saw Vasudeo Kirtikar he received me very kindly and whenever I sought his advice and guidance, he readily gave them.

On my grandfather's death the Press paid him a wonderful tribute which continued for several days, English, Marathi and Gujarati journals vying with each other in rendering tribute to his memory. The string of visitors who paid a visit after his death was unbroken.

He had preferred his life at the Bar to the safe and quiet position of the Bench except for a short period when Sir Lawrence Jenkins practically compelled him to accept a Judgeship for a short time which he regarded as a reward for his great career at the Bar. He was a Professor of a Law School at Ahmedabad for more than twelve years and during that time he took great interest in social reform movements and came into intimate contact with such pioneers of reform as the late Bholanath Sarabhai and Mahipatram Rupram. Amongst his pupils ranked Diwan Bahadur Manibhai Jasbhai, Ambalal Sakarlal and Rao Bahadur Lalshankar Unishankar, figures well-known in Gujarat for their social and philanthropic work. His connexion with the University was of a very long standing and he held the position of a Syndic in Law for several years. He was a patron of Marathi literature and, with this view, he subscribed to a large number of magazines and books and distributed them among Hindu ladies. As a Trustee of the Aryan Education Society, his work will remain a standing memorial to his guidance and philanthropy. His religious beliefs were grounded upon the monistic philosophy of Shankaracharya and in defence of his teachings he contributed for several years to a paper called *East and West*, proclaiming the truths of the *Advaita* system of *Vedanta*. His study of the *Upanishads*, the *Gita* and Shankaracharya's works was profound, and as Schopenhauer once observed about himself, the study of the *Vedant* was the solace of his life and the solace of his death. His contributions to the press on the eventful contact between Hinduism and Buddhism did much to reconcile the two systems of Indian thought and philosophy. The predominant character of his

writings is his simplicity, lucidity and practical application of the truths of philosophy to the daily needs of life. His services to Indian philosophy mainly lay in clearing up much of the misunderstanding about the subject, especially in European minds, and his knowledge of European philosophy, for instance, of Kant and Hegel, enabled him to present the truth of Indian philosophy in language which European philosophy found it easy to understand. I received, after his death, several indications that his teachings and writings had produced a profound impression in the European world of philosophy, as the late Lord Haldane once testified in a letter to him.

I shall record here briefly the great honour which the High Court rendered him on receiving the news of his death. The Chief Justice ordered the closure of the High Court for the whole day, a tribute which was usually paid to Judges who died in harness and not in retirement. After referring to his long friendship with him, the Chief Justice observed:

In the Court he earned the reputation as a lawyer which I do not hesitate to say has been hardly equalled in this city and certainly he was always courteous, precise, tactful and independent. After a long period of office as Government Pleader, he was appointed to the Bench where, if anything, he added to the reputation he had already earned, and in all things and in all ways, he set an example to every member of his profession because the Bench and the Bar could always be certain that whatever he said was to be relied upon and in all his doings and actions he was absolutely straight, which is the greatest honour that any man can attain in the profession which he had adopted.

The Government Pleader added his tribute as follows:

He was one of the first batch of the English-speaking pleaders who commenced to practise shortly after the establishment of the High Court in 1862—one of the illustrious group of advocates whose names are remembered at the Bar as lawyers of conspicuous merit and distinction. His name will ever be associated with those of the late Mr. Justice Nanabhai Haridas, Rao Bahadur Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik and Mr. Shantaram Narayan, for all that is great and honourable in the traditions of the Bar. His knowledge of Law was most profound. As an advocate, his legal acumen, his quick perception, complete grasp and mastery of details, tact, moderation and judgement, above all his clear and lucid treatment of even the most complicated questions, always secured for him a respectful hearing from the Bench. As Government

Pleader, he brought his great talents and long experience to bear on the many difficult questions of land tenure and other subjects which came up for adjudication during the tenure of his office. In the conduct of criminal cases, he fully realized the high responsibility of his office and neither omitted any matter of importance on behalf of the Crown, nor presented any point unfairly against the accused, his whole effort being directed to assist the Court in discovering the truth. He was extremely kind and courteous to the junior members of the Bar. He sympathized with their difficulties whenever his help and advice were sought and did all he could to raise the tone and status of the Bar. He was not only a great lawyer but also a great scholar. He was a student among students all throughout his life. In the midst of his professional engagements, he devoted himself ardently and passionately to the study of ancient and modern philosophy. The *Vedantic* philosophy had a special fascination for him and his constant and valuable contributions on the subject to various journals and periodicals will be ever remembered. In him we have lost a ripe lawyer, an accomplished scholar, a true and trusted friend and counsellor, a noble and upright man. He has set an example of thoroughness, devotion to duty, profound and high moral rectitude which is worthy of imitation by all. His example will remain with us as a cherished possession, to guide and stimulate our effort in the honourable profession to which we belong. It will be difficult to supply his place at the Bar and he will be missed long and missed much.

After his death I took up the editing of his writings on *Vedant*. It was always his wish that, setting aside the temptation of political life, I should devote myself to acquiring the solace of Indian philosophy which had given him much happiness during his life. He left behind him a very large library and a whole shelfful of notes dealing comparatively with the claims of Indian and European philosophy but unfortunately, owing to my early absorption with political life, I found leisure only to edit a small part of his writings in a volume called *Some Aspects of Vedant* in the introduction to which I have described his lifelong belief in the teachings of this philosophy in the following words:

He profoundly believed that the Vedanta was a system not only of thought but also of life. In his own life, he earnestly sought to fulfil scrupulously the duties, which, to use his own words, the Vedanta enjoins with reference to man's relations to himself, to his kith and kin, to his community, to his country, to the whole of mankind, nay, to the entire animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms as parts of one organism. It was, therefore, not merely from intellectual conviction,

but from practical experience, that he felt that the Vedanta, to use his own words again, was one of the best systems, if not the best, which could be made the basis of a universal religion for civilized communities.

Of his voluminous writings, I could select for publication only those on topics which had acquired about that time controversial importance owing to the hostile attacks of European philosophers on Indian philosophy, notably on the absolute and rigorous monism of Shankaracharya. The publication in the year 1903 by Lord Haldane of *The Pathway to Reality* (Gifford Lectures for 1902 and 1903) was practically an invitation to Indian philosophers to answer the criticism of that eminent author and even, in some cases, to supplement his discourses in that book by a reference to analogous Indian doctrines. My grandfather's writings in their earlier stages, made an attempt to answer such criticism.

What was, however, generally felt in India amongst philosophical circles as most extraordinary was that though Lord Haldane in his endeavours to deal "with the meaning and nature" of what he calls the "Ultimate Reality", just the topic which had engaged the learning and research of Indian philosophers—notably Shankaracharya for his whole life—he (Lord Haldane) based his conclusion exclusively upon "foundations laid more than two thousands years ago by Aristotle and by the German thinkers who began to interpret Aristotle at the beginning of the last century." The teaching and conclusions of Indian philosophy concerned with the same inquiry, viz. "the meaning and the nature of ultimate reality", long anterior to the age of Aristotle, received hardly any attention from that learned author except occasional hostile criticism arising from a misunderstanding of the Indian doctrines. My grandfather attempted to answer Lord Haldane's criticism and to supplement it on identical topics by his own contributions.

The publication of my grandfather's writings attracted great attention, both in India and abroad, and I received many letters showing that his attempt was appreciated and served his purpose. What was found particularly helpful, especially by the authors abroad, was his clear summary in Chapter I, of what he called 'the leading ideas of the Vedanta'.

But, however useful and interesting this disquisition may

prove to students of philosophy, the subject being deeply tinged with abstruse philosophical thought, I have thought it desirable to exclude it from this narrative.

Lucknow Congress to Tilak's Death (1916 to 1920)

DURING this period I had the opportunity of participating in many conferences—political, social, religious and cultural. As during this period my position at the Bar had been very nearly settled, I could devote more attention to public work.

The first conference of importance during this period was the 13th session of the Indian National Congress held at Lucknow. It lasted from 26 to 29 December 1916. The entente between the Congress and the Muslim League, to which reference was made in the concluding part of the previous chapter, developed in course of time. The Bombay Congress of 1915 had dissolved with a mandate to formulate, in concert with the Muslim League, a scheme of Self-Government, for India. Accordingly, on 17 and 18 November 1919, a joint conference was held at Calcutta and both the bodies agreed to a scheme which represented the demand of a united India for Self-Government. Its consideration was the special feature of the Lucknow Congress and formed the basis of its main resolution. Tilak took a very prominent part in bringing about this result, being led by expectations to which a reference will be made in the following pages.

Jagat Narayan of Allahabad was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The subject had aroused the greatest enthusiasm, and it was responsible for the presence of an unprecedentedly large number of delegates from all parts of the country at that year's session. The President-elect of the Session was Ambikacharan Muzumdar and the proposal of his name was made in a speech of Pandit Jagat Narayan. A few extracts from the Pandit's speech will indicate the great enthusiasm of the occasion.

The present year will be a memorable one in the history of our political evolution. For the first time, since the unfortunate split at Surat, we witness the spectacle of a united Congress. Realising that in union alone is strength, both the parties have laid aside their differences and resolved to work shoulder to shoulder to win for India a position compatible with her self-respect and dignity in the British Empire. They have heard the call of the country and obliterating old divisions rallied round her in the hour of her need.

The conference [at Calcutta] had marked a great step forward in our political evolution and disclosed a substantial identity of views between Hindus and Muhammadans.

Speaking of the effect of the war, Jagat Narayan observed:

The assistance rendered by India during the war has fired her imagination. She has, so to say, found herself. She has acquired a new spirit of self-reliance and dignity and realised her own worth by coming to Britain's help at a critical time. The battlefields of Europe, Africa and Asia bear witness to the fighting qualities of her sons and their deeds of heroism written in characters of blood have thrilled every Indian heart.

Jagat Narayan then dealt with India's claim to Self-Government, cleared the objections raised against it and mentioned several cases relating to portions of the British Empire like Canada, Australia and South Africa, where the confidence shown by England in conferring Self-Government on them had produced peace, amity, good-will and progress. "There was no reason to believe," he observed, "that India would respond differently to the grant of Self-Government to her."

Surendranath Bannerji, proposing Ambikacharan Muzumdar's name as the President of the Congress Session, observed:

A new spirit is abroad and we live in stirring times. At such a time, we need the wisdom, the tact, the firmness and the conciliatoriness of a man like Mr. Muzumdar and I have confidence that you will profit by his sound, wise guidance and statesmanship in the critical time that awaits you.

The President, Muzumdar, began his speech with a reference to the war in the following words:

We meet today under the shadow of a great calamity. The war is still upon us and the deadly work of slaughter and destruction continues unabated. England and her Allies have taken up arms for the defence of the cause of Liberty. India has contributed her quota in this titanic struggle. Symptoms of the weakening of the enemy are visible and signs are not wanting of an approaching settlement. We hope and trust that, when the time for settlement comes, India will have a full share of her representation in the Councils of the Empire and her representatives will be there in adequate numbers and their voices will be heard in the settlement in the councils.

After paying a tribute to the dead, he referred to what he called a re-united Congress in the following words:

If the united Congress was buried in the debris of the old French Garden at Surat, it is re-born today in the Kaiser Bag of Lucknow, the garden of the gorgeous King Wajed Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the wilderness of misunderstanding and the mazes of unpleasant controversies, both the wings of the Indian Nationalist party have come to realise the fact that united they stand but divided they fall, and brothers have at last met brothers and embraced each other with the gush and ardour, peculiar to a reconciliation after a long separation. Blessed are the peacemakers.

Addressing the younger men of the Congress, he observed:

Remember, it is the old Congressmen who have built this organisation, given a shape and form to it, worked out its details and inspired the people with the very ideal which is swaying their minds and surging in their thoughts from one end to the other. Believing, as I do, in the evolution of a national life in perpetual succession, I have no difficulty in admitting that there is a limit also to caution, wisdom and sobriety, beyond which they cannot be exercised without their forfeiting the characteristics of these virtues and without their degenerating into pusillanimity and moral turpitude. There is as much danger in rashness as in imbecility and the one may serve as a cloak for inaction as the other may contribute to wreck the most useful institution.

Speaking of the form of Government then in operation, he proceeded to describe its slow evolutions from despotism, benevolent despotism, bureaucracy nearing its end, and made reference to the prevailing national spirit in the following words.

The people have completely outgrown this system and a new spirit has arisen in the country. Call it visionary, call it impatient idealism, call it intoxication if you choose, that spirit is the manifestation of a democratic force which is transforming the destinies of an old world to a new order of things.

He made a detailed reference to the mistakes made by the bureaucracy in nearly all departments of public administration and in proof of the assertion that public sentiments deserve to be trusted and respected, he made reference to a statement of Burke:

I am not one of those who think that the people are never wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people.

Quoting this dictum of Burke with approbation, Lord Morley had observed:

Nay, experience perhaps justifies [the British statesman] in going further. When popular discontents are prevalent something has generally been found amiss in the Constitution or administration. The people have no interest in disorder. When they go wrong, it is their error not their crime. The revolutions that come to pass in the great states are not the result of chance nor of popular caprice. As for the populace, it is never from a passion that it rebels but from their impatience of sufferings.

Referring to India's claim to Self-Government the President referred to John Stuart Mill's dictum laying down three conditions for Self-Government which had been universally accepted by all writers on political philosophy. These conditions were:

- (1) that the people for whom the form of Government is intended should be willing to accept it;
- (2) that they must be willing and able to do what is necessary to keep it standing; and
- (3) that they must be willing and able to do what it requires of them to enable it to fulfil its purposes.

"To these three tests I will add," said the President, "a fourth, by way of a rider, directly to meet the arguments of

our critics—have the people given satisfactory evidence of their capacity for Self-Government?"

The President arrived at the conclusion that all these conditions had been satisfactorily met by the people of India.

Referring to the Hindu-Muslim antipathies, of which a great deal had been made by the opponents of Indian freedom, the President observed:

It is neither fair nor judicious to exaggerate these differences. The Hindus and Musalmans are both of common Aryan stock, while Hindu anthropology traces them to a common descent within the legendary period of their ancient history. Neither the Parsis nor the Muhammadans of India owe any temporal allegiance either to the Shah of Persia or the Sultan of Turkey. They are now Indians as much as the Hindus. But why indulge in speculation against the settled fact?

He then referred to the Calcutta settlement and said:

The vital issue has been solved and the main point has been gained. Only the seeds having been sown, the seedlings have just sprouted and for God's sake let us not quarrel over the division of the crop which still demands our combined labour and attention before the harvest comes.

Even in British circles this fact has received adequate attention. *The Times*, the leading organ of conservative opinion in England, has been struck with the unexpected demonstration in India and has frankly admitted that the Indian problem must be henceforth looked at from a different point of view. "On our part," says the great journal, "when we have settled accounts with the enemy, India must be allowed a more ample space in the Councils of the Empire."

In concluding his speech the President observed:

To the Indian nationalists their country must be their religion, taught by no priests but by the beating hearts and her welfare their common faith which makes the many one. Hush be the whispers of jealousy and spite and silent be the discordant notes, rancorous dissensions amongst you. Sink all differences in the supreme common cause. Unite and stand solidly shoulder to shoulder resolved either to conquer or to die. For what is life worth if we cannot live like men? Firm and resolute in your purpose, be always manly and dignified in your attitude and sober and cautious in your steps. There is no royal road to freedom. Reverses there must be, but reverses should only stiffen your backs.

On the second day of the Congress Session, Sir James

Meston, the Lieut. Governor of the Province, accompanied by Lady Meston and members of his personal staff, paid a visit to the Congress and was given a cordial welcome which the President offered him on behalf of the Congress. He mentioned previous instances, few in number, when the highest administrators had paid a visit to the Congress, though this course had ceased to be operative during the previous few years. Sir James Meston made a reply to this cordial reception as follows:

There has been between the Indian National Congress and myself, from the day of its inception, a curious link in time and in sympathy. The Congress first saw the light in the year 1885, and that was the year in which I first began my endeavours to serve India. Throughout these intervening 31 years I have thus had a unique opportunity of watching the development of this great movement, and I have watched it with interest and, believe me, not without sympathy. It is, therefore, a very special pleasure to me to be for the first time a guest and a visitor of your Congress meeting and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the warmth and sincerity of your wholly unexpected welcome.

Several resolutions, of importance at that time, were then passed and in the end Gandhi spoke on indentured labour. On the third day Surendranath Bannerji moved the following resolution on Self-Government:

(a) That having regard to the fact that the great communities of India are the inheritors of ancient civilizations and have shown great capacity for government and administration, and to the progress of education and public spirit made by them during a century of British rule, and further having regard to the fact that the present system of government does not satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people and has become unsuited to the existing conditions and requirements, this Congress is of opinion that the time has come when His Majesty the King Emperor should be pleased to issue a Proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date.

(b) That this Congress demands that a definite step should be taken towards Self-Government by granting the reforms contained in the scheme prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in concert with the Reform Committee appointed by the All-India Muslim League.

(c) That in the re-construction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire and the Self-Governing Dominions.

Surendranath, moving the resolution, observed:

The Bombay Congress dissolved [1915] with a mandate to formulate, in concert with the Muslim League, a scheme of Self-Government, call it Home Rule if you like.

A joint Conference was held and we agreed to a scheme which represents the demand of united India on the subject. I had the honour of presiding over the deliberations of that Conference and I will say this, on behalf of the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League, that throughout they exhibited a spirit of compromise, of sweet reasonableness, which, to my mind, constitutes the most valuable qualification for Self-Government. The spirit of compromise was conspicuous in our deliberations. The scheme is before you, and it is a crowning testimony to the growing unity of feeling between Hindus and Muslims. Today the leaders of the Muhammadan community have joined the Congress. Three cheers for them! They have received us with open arms, none with greater earnestness and cordiality than my respected and honoured friend the Raja Saheb of Mahamudabad, whose independence, patriotism and keen solicitude for a good understanding between the Hindus and the Muhammadans have won for him, and in an unstinted measure, the esteem, confidence and regard of all sections of the Indian community.

We are on the eve of a great re-construction. The world after the war will not be the same as it was before the war. England and India will participate in that reconstruction. The object of the war is to vindicate the sanctity of treaty obligations, to protect the rights of minor nationalities, to uphold the sacredness of scraps and bits of paper. In the same spirit, I submit, we are entitled to hold that the gracious messages contained in our Charters and Proclamations should be redeemed and upheld, for the moral law does not work by latitudes and longitudes. It is of universal application.

Referring to the scheme formulated by the Hindus and Muhammadans jointly the President said:

I think it necessary that this scheme should be known to all the delegates present. It has been considered by the Subjects Committee consisting of over 300 delegates, but it is my earnest wish that it should be known to every one of the delegates present here. It is the most important thing. The Magna Charta was presented to an unwilling King by a handful of illiterate Barons. Here at the Kaisar Bag in Lucknow educated India presents its demand to an obstinate bureaucracy.

Following the President's speech, Hridayanath Kunzru presented the Constitutional demands which had been adopted

after consultation with a representative committee of the All-India Muslim League.

These demands were called the Reform Scheme and related to improvement in the (1) Provincial Legislative Council, (2) Imperial Legislative Council, (3) Government of India, (4) Secretary of State in Council, (5) India and the Empire, (6) Military and other matters. Mrs. Besant moved the resolution relating to their acceptance. In the course of her speech she said:

I propose to draw your attention to the last clause of the resolution which says that in the construction of the Empire after the war, India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing Dominions.

She dealt with the objections which were raised by British opinion against this demand and observed:

It is said that you ought not to embarrass the British Government by raising such a question as this in the middle of the war, but we are only following the example of the self-governing Dominions and are only taking the advice of Mr. Bonar Law, the late Colonial Secretary, who advised the Dominions to strike the iron while it was red hot. This is the advice that unasked, I admit, we take to ourselves. The iron is red hot but after the reconstruction of the Empire the iron will be cold and where, I ask, is the blacksmith who allows the red hot iron to cool down, before he tries to strike it to the shape and form he wants?

Then she referred to another objection against this demand—that India is a coloured nation. On that she observed:

She is a coloured people, she is not colourless and colourless people, it is said, have the right of domination over them, the coloured people. Coloured people have only the duty of submission. But that is not the doctrine that this coloured nation is willing to accept. Has God given liberty alone to the pale faces and not to the coloured people of the globe? It is not colour that counts. It is a clever brain and the strong heart that count and not the colour of the skin that covers them. The Lord Buddha, the Lord Mahomed and the Lord Christ were coloured men. All the founders of religion were coloured men. Have the colourless produced a single founder of religion?

Mrs. Besant proceeded to say:

It is only Home Rule that will enable us to defend ourselves. Until we have Home Rule we cannot be armed as we should be. Oh, it is said, there are divisions among you. There are none in England? Before the great war in 1914 the United Kingdom was on the brink of civil war. Was England then unfit for Self-Government? How far was England educated when the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed? How far was she educated even when the Bill of 1867 was passed? Has England been so quiet under difficulties? In 1913, were there no strikes paralyzing railway traffic and threatening London with starvation because of lack of transport? Yet England is fit for Self-Government and you, quiet and industrious, are not. I remember—I cannot say I remember—I have read that before the Bill of 1832 there were riots in Bristol, Warwick Castle was burnt down. There was a massacre at Peterloo, the whole country was disturbed; but was that a reason for not giving a share of Self-Government? No. It was a reason for widening the franchise to get rid of the difficulty that existed.

England is fighting for her life and has called India to help her with as much as India is able to give. Oh, India would have given so much more. So many more men, so many more volunteers in order to help England in the day of her need, but England at her peril calls the Indian soldiers to fight for the liberty of Belgium and the sacredness of treaties and then sends those soldiers back here to find their people still in bondage and treaties disregarded, torn in pieces and thrown aside. That which England fights for in Europe, she must admit here.

The resolution was then supported by Tilak. He said:

The resolution which I wish to support is the one for which the Congress has been fighting for the last thirty years. The first note of it was heard 10 years ago on the banks of the Hoogly and it was sounded by the Grand Old Man of India—Dadabhai Naoroji. Since the note was sounded, differences of opinion arose. Some said that the note ought to be carried on and ought to be followed by a detailed scheme at once, that it should be taken up and made to resound all over India as soon as possible. There was another party amongst us that said that it could not be done so soon, that the tune of that note required to be a little lower, and that was the cause of dissension ten years ago and I am glad to say that I have lived these ten years to see that we were re-united in this Congress and we are going to put our voices and shoulders together to push on the scheme of Self-Government. Not only have we lived to see these differences closed, but to see the differences of Hindus and Muhammadans closed as well. So we have now united in every way in the United Provinces and we have found that luck in Lucknow.

The resolution is in fact a synthesis of all the Congress resolutions

passed during the last thirty years, a synthesis that will help all to proceed to work in a definite and responsible manner. I believe that the Congress has done its work as a deliberative body. The next part is the executive and that will be placed before you afterwards. Remember what has to be done. All thorns in your way have been removed. Do not shirk but work for what is described in this scheme. The days of wonders are gone. These are days of work and incessant labour and I hope that by the help of Providence you will find that energy and those resources which are required for carrying out the scheme within the next two years to come.

The resolution was further supported by Mazr-ul-Haque of Bihar in a very short speech. Other leaders gave their support and ultimately the resolution was unanimously passed and it was resolved that a copy of it be sent under the President's signature to His Majesty's Government in England through His Excellency the Viceroy.

The session then terminated with an impressive speech by the President.

The achievement of a common demand, to which so many leading men referred, came to be called the Lucknow Pact, which for a time convulsed not only the patriots of India but its critics also. Its great value arose from the fact that it removed the hallucination which had been brought about by the facile remarks of Britons that the Hindu and the Muhammadan in India were constitutionally different and must always remain irreconcilable sections of the Indian population. A number of British public men had been making these facile comments and laid undue emphasis on the barriers of race, culture, and social customs which they alleged kept these two communities apart. How old this hallucination created by British public men is, will be seen from the fact that as far back as 1892, when introducing in the House of Commons a Bill relating to the Government of India, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Curzon described the Indian people as, "sundered into irreconcilable camps by differences of caste, of religion, of custom, which held men fast bound during their life time and the rigour of which did not abate even beyond the grave."

Nearly forty years later (1930), the Indian Statutory Commission expressed itself to similar effect:

It would be an utter misapprehension to suppose that Hindu-Muslim antagonism is analogous to the separation between religious denomi-

nations in contemporary Europe. Differences of race, a different system of law and the absence of inter-marriage constitute a far more effective barrier. It is a basic opposition, manifesting differences at every turn in social custom and economic competition, as well as in mutual religious antipathy.

Later, in 1934, the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform observed with equal emphasis:

The difference between the Hindu and Muslim is not only of religion in the stricter sense but also of law and of culture. They may be said indeed to represent two distinct and separate civilizations.

Later, within recent times, Sir Reginald Coupland, in his study of the Constitutional Problem of India, observed that "the main distinction between the Hindu and the Muslim is not physical but cultural. It is the outcome of two sharply contrasted religions and of the social systems, the ways of life and thought they have inspired."

The Sapru Committee, of which I was a member, in the course of its work received many statements from esteemed Muhammadan leaders controverting the views mentioned above and pointing out that they were essentially wrong and were largely responsible for creating a feeling amongst the Muslims of their irreconcilable difference from the Hindus.

Consequently the achievement of the Lucknow Pact was a memorable event. It showed that Hindus and Muslims could unite to make a common political demand on the British Government. Vital concessions were made to Muslim sentiments. Confining our attention to the three main demands of the Muslims, viz. separate electorates, extent of Muslim representation and safeguards, the Pact conceded that "adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election and the Muslims should be represented through special electorates in the Provincial Legislative Council in proportions very largely enlarging what they had enjoyed before." Separate electorates for Muslims were agreed to and were to be extended to the Punjab and Central Provinces. Seats were allotted on a very generous scale as compared with Muslim representation under the Morley-Minto Reforms.

For instance, in Bengal the increase was from 10.5 per cent to 40 per cent; in the Punjab from 25 per cent to 50 per cent.

Similarly in the Imperial Legislative Council at Delhi the Pact provided that one-third of the Indian elected members should be Muslims, elected by separate Muslim electorates in the several Provinces in the proportion, as nearly as might be, in which they were represented in the Provincial Legislative Council by separate Muslim electorates.

It is noteworthy that amongst those who took a prominent part in bringing about this Pact at Lucknow was Tilak, which surprised many nationalists of his time. Gokhale had accepted communal electorates in 1909. Tilak did so in 1916. His acceptance was of course based on the hope that communal electorates would only be temporary and the Muslims themselves would soon give them up. His hopes were shared by Jinnah as will appear from the extract of his evidence before the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1919:

MAJOR ORMSBY-GORE: You said, you spoke from the point of view of India? You speak really as an Indian nationalist?

M. A. JINNAH: I do.

MAJOR ORMSBY-GORE: That is to say that at the earliest possible moment you wish to do away in political life with any distinction between Muhammadan and Hindu?

M. A. JINNAH: Yes: Nothing will please me more than when that day comes.

Whether this hope of Tilak and Jinnah was realised and whether as a result of the Lucknow Pact the two communities were welded together or were driven more and more apart will be described in the later chapters of this narrative.

It may be remarked that although the Hindus had, with this hope, agreed to separate electorates for the Muslims, they soon realised that, instead of promoting harmony, they had widened the gulf between themselves and the Muslims. Consequently, during the next few years repeated but unsuccessful attempts were made, by means of All-Party Conferences and Conventions, to bridge the gulf.

In September, 1916 the junior members of the High Court Bar, who suffered very badly in the competition owing to the selfishness of the senior members in keeping all work to themselves, set up a movement asking the Judges to provide a scheme by which a fair share of junior practice would automatically pass into the hands of junior members. I took a prominent part in this agitation of behalf of the junior Bar

and an entry in my diary of 20 September states that I had a conference on this matter with Chief Justice Scott and I did my best to persuade him that the Judges should take a hand in regulating this matter to secure a more even and fair distribution of legal work at the High Court. I found the Chief Justice very sympathetic. In the end, a remedying measure was attempted but without success. The combination of some senior men proved too strong.

In the beginning of October of that year Bombay celebrated, with due enthusiasm, Mrs. Besant's birthday. Large audiences were present but compared to such celebrations after the acquisition of freedom, I must own that there was comparatively less hero-worship and deification in them than at present. The personality of the celebration was not then regarded as semi-divine or worshipful, almost rising to the position of a canonized saint. The celebration was purely a political affair—a remembrance with gratitude of the work done by the personality, without any element of deification and in the speeches made on the occasion, even the foibles of the personality concerned did not remain without friendly criticism. The present order of things appears to be different. As to whether this is progress or deterioration in the growth of a free national life, opinions may differ.

THE principal event in the year 1917 was a political conference held at Nasik, on 12 May. Maharashtra had not had such a conference for a long time. Shrinivas Shastri presided at the political conference. His speech, which unfortunately is not easily available now, was in his usual style and tenor of thought and the prominent nationalists present at this conference received his speech with general approval. I spoke on an important resolution relating to Self-Government. The resolution was as follows:

This conference affirms the resolution adopted by the Indian National Congress at Lucknow last December, outlining a scheme of reforms as a definite step towards Self-Government for India and lays special emphasis on clauses (a) and (c) of the said resolution.

In my speech I said:

There can be no parleying, no compromise, one people cannot rule another people permanently except for their own gain and spoliation.

This is an absurd claim and ought to be repudiated. Whether we have become fit for Self-Government or not should be decided by the enlightened political opinion of the country. Liberty alone could prepare a people for the enjoyment of liberty. In the interest of England herself, the bureaucracy should be removed from India. The time is ripe when India should ask for Self-Government, finding that the feeling in England, consequent on the participation of India in the war, has become favourable to such a claim.

Tilak supported this resolution and observed that the present presented the most favourable opportunity that had offered itself within the last century. Ideas of liberty were abroad in the country, union between all sects and communities had been brought about and if we allowed the opportunity to pass, it would be futile to expect that we would ever attain our end.

We must therefore keep up our agitation, lawful and constitutional, and obtain Self-Government. Our help in the war has been keenly appreciated by statesmen in England and had changed their angle of vision. If and when our movement for Self-Government within the British Empire was crowned with success, we could render much more assistance in men and money, should another such occasion arise necessitating their help.

The resolution was passed with great enthusiasm.

Two days later was held a Social Conference for Maharashtra at which I presided. Tilak and other Nationalists were present at Nasik. I made a personal request to Tilak to be present at the Social Conference. I was anxious that by his presence he should remove the wrong impression that he was against Social Reform and I am very happy to record that he attended the Social Conference and was present to hear my speech along with some other Nationalist friends. His presence no doubt caused considerable surprise amongst his political supporters.

In his speech at the Social Conference he observed:

Because I am unable to attend a Conference you must not imagine that I have no sympathy for the cause. One man alone cannot attend to all efforts although he may desire to do so. I act on the principle of division of work.

Tilak's presence at the Social Conference was regarded as

a great event not only at Nasik but in Western India and many journals commented on that fact. To me it was a personal triumph that Tilak attended and I thus got the opportunity of saying in his presence many things relating to social and political reforms. In this narrative I shall content myself with a very brief summary of my speech, selecting only such portions thereof as had a national importance in those days.

A school of thinkers is now coming into existence, finding their adherents among the intrepid and generous-hearted youths of the country, who sincerely believe that the ultimate basis and sanctions of social reform have to be largely modified. It is with them no more a defence or a reform of Brahmanism so as to make it acceptable to its Christian critics. It is not even a revival or a restoration of the ancient ideals of the Vedic period, it is not likewise the problem of penalising cruel practices by enlarging the purview of the Indian Penal Code or adjusting the relations of one caste against another; it is now a question, as I feel, of so organising the entire Hindu society, in all its component parts, as to furnish a social *environment*, wherein the children of the community will grow in the full development of the social virtues, which the present situation in the country as a whole and as a component part of the British Empire demands. Hindu society has to set its house in order, so as to set free, inside its pale, those forces of nationalism and culture which will gradually approximate its ideals to those of other communities in India, and eventually make the evolution of Indian nationality more and more easy and possible, so that, in the fullness of time, Brahmanism and even Hinduism may have to shed some of their cherished privileges and functions if, by the process, the work of national unification may be expedited. I feel that the root ideas of our social system are no longer suitable to our present needs. Those ideas may be briefly set forth as isolation, submission to outside force or power more than to the inner voice of conscience, perception of fictitious differences between men and men, due to heredity and birth, a passive acquiescence in evil or wrong doing, a general indifference to secular well-being almost bordering upon fatalism. These ideas have, as a result, led to the existing family arrangements, where woman is entirely subordinated to man, the lower castes to the higher, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity. All these evils flow from the prevalence of the ideas mentioned above and we hold that so long as these ideas remain operative on our mind, we may change our outward forms and institutions and be none the better for the change.

Referring to the connection between social and political

reform and the unwisdom of separating the two into different compartments, I observed:

The conflict of caste has become very acrimonious in the Hindu society largely owing to the political conditions in which we have to live. It is no wonder, to my mind, that in the cramped life, such as we Indians have had to live for several decades, caste distinctions should become so marked and race conflicts so frequent. Our political life is such that it provides few opportunities of united action, e.g. in the defence or protection of the country which we call our own. How few occasions have arisen when an appeal could be made to our higher patriotism for subordinating class prejudices to feelings of mutual trust and dependence in the face of a common pursuit or danger. Under Self-Government, many occasions arise which necessitate the urge of the higher calls of patriotism and provide a fertile germ of social unification. But owing to our dependence and deprivation of Self-Government, we find in India not the free environment which fosters social unity. Those who advocate the cause of Self-Government as being the open sesame to many wonderful opportunities of social cohesion, appear, so far at least as this aspect of the question is concerned, to see more clearly than their rivals who ignore altogether the importance of political freedom as contributing to the development of social aggregation and solidarity.

It is, therefore, impossible in my opinion to put social and political reforms into two water-tight compartments, or to set up any frontiers between them. Those who set up an opposition between these two departments of national activity or regard them as subject to a psychological or historic sequence are on wrong lines. To say that to be politically great we must be socially perfect as a nation is to misread history, just as much to argue that the grant of political autonomy will automatically prove a panacea for social evils. The school of thought, of which I stand here as a humble exponent, emphatically believes that both these positions are extreme ones and therefore equally inadequate to express the truth which lies between them. We believe that the same qualities are involved in political as in social endeavour and that a nation which aims at greatness in the one sphere cannot succeed without developing the same forces in the other sphere. Until we do so, we are on a wrong track. Our school, therefore, stands for the inter-dependence of social and political reform and desires to be an interpreter between the two. By long dissociation, the two camps have ceased to recognise each other. The familiar lineaments so well-known to each other at the commencement of this self-confused divergence have become obscure by an adventitious hostility. Our effort, therefore, is to bridge between the two mighty causes each languishing by reason of its isolation from the other, so that when mutual recognition takes place and the seeming hostility is removed, the current of national

activity may flow in one common channel uninterrupted. Social reform without political progress is futile; and political freedom without the leaven of social purity and justice, is race or communal aggrandizement. If the rule of a European Collector is galling because it is unsympathetic, that of a Brahman or Prabhu in power may be more so, if sympathy and humility have not superseded caste or racial hauteur. We, therefore, are the more zealous social reformers because we yield to none in our desire to obtain political privileges fast and widely; nay, we fail to understand, if we may be permitted to say so in all candour, how anybody can desire political progress and at the same time oppose the march of social equality.

To social reformers of our school, a person who regards the Depressed Class men with aversion is quite as bad as the worst among Anglo-Indians. They are both, to our mind, manifestations of the same vice, with varying degrees of pigment in the skin. We expect, if we may boldly say so, that same mischief from the rule of each. The same heart beats in each, under different forms of clothing and heredity. As Hindus are accustomed to the doctrine that a person in one life can have the body of a man and the heart of a hyena and, with this traditional belief, we find nothing difficult to understand that the body may be Indian with the heart of an alien autocrat. We believe that the people who have outgrown the need of an I. C. S. bureaucrat and complain against his irresponsible rule cannot but raise an equally loud voice against *gurus* and religious autocrats, the basis of whose rule is in no way better. We cannot understand the phenomenon, which we observe in the present age, of advanced political thinkers rebelling against the misuse of political powers by the British bureaucrat remaining dumb and acquiescent before the irrational tyranny of religious autocrats.

Referring to the internal strife in Hindu families I observed:

Owing to our social system there is a chronic abundance of strife and bickerings inside many Hindu families. The fault is of the social system. It divides brother from brother, father from son, mother-in-law from daughter-in-law, by making the gain of the one, the loss of the other. It puts our society in a state of perpetual ferment and tension where the hedge lawyer alone prospers.

Referring to the unwillingness and inability of the British Government to respond to the social needs of the Indian community by undertaking, encouraging and not hampering social legislation I observed:

There is indeed no inducement in having an enlightened people like the British to govern us, if we are to be told that the British Government, with all its inherited notions of right, justice and liberty

and the power and prestige which it commands, will yet remain an indifferent spectator in social matters. The proper theory in this behalf would appear to be that the State in its collective capacity represents, and ought to represent the wisdom, mercy, charity of its best citizens. The State cannot shirk its duty to remedy the evils which no private combination of men can check adequately or speedily enough.

Towards the end of my address, I said:

Nature has made India great. She has showered her gifts with a lavish hand and with all the rich diversity of soil and climate, fauna and flora, she has yet imposed a unity. The position of India, in the scheme of nature, is such that the country has never been and never shall be insignificant. We have every reason to be proud of the achievements of our ancestors, in Religion, Philosophy, Science and Art. Shall we again become worthy of our illustrious ancestors and the magnificent country we call our own? The problem of reform, whether you call it Political, Social or Economic, is set for us and it has to be faced whether we will or not. The cataclysmic changes going on in the world round us are compressing the work of centuries into a few years and making for a New Heaven and a New Earth. In this expected rebirth of human society what part shall we elect to play? That is the crux of the question. Let there be no delusion about it.

I concluded as follows:

These are some of the suggestions I have ventured to lay before you for your consideration. I have made them from the standpoint of a large section of young men who believe that outside the tabernacle of Social Reform there is a large class of earnest-minded persons, who have been unnecessarily frightened by social reform, and that the principles on which both the movements are based are laid on the imperishable bed-rock of justice, charity and freedom. If this alliance between social and political reform could be made, we think that it would save the country from a tremendous wastage of effort and our public opinion would gain in purity and intensity.

In the talk which I later had with Tilak, I most agreeably discovered that he completely agreed with my views, and owing to his known agreement, my speech received a very cordial and appreciable reception even from the conservative press of Western India.

The Press of Bombay, English and Indian, gave as expected most enthusiastic support to my views. Among others, Sir Stanley Reed, the popular and erudite editor of *The Times of India*, editorially supported my views especially those

relating to the deficiencies of Hindu social life, its growing unsuitability to the requirements of modern society and the unwillingness and inability of Government to undertake or encourage urgent social legislation. After approving of the specific instances which I had cited in this connection, he ended with the ethical observation: "Surely here is an opportunity for a liberal and equitable High Court to set right what are obviously stupid anomalies." The main Nationalist organ of Bombay, the *Bombay Chronicle*, after quoting several parts of my speech, concluded editorially with the observation: "The point of view which Mr. Jayakar placed before the Conference indicates the right path of orderly development of the country." The *Advocate of India*, the third English Daily of Bombay, summarised my speech in the following words:

Mr. Jayakar rightly calls himself a representative of that school of thought mainly represented by the younger generation of the present age which seeks to push into the region of social reform, the same bold and vigorous principles of thought and action on which political reform has been attempted to be based in recent years, and seeks to emphasise the belief that reform, whether social or political, is essentially a change of temper and attitude and admits no compartments and knows no frontiers. Mr. Jayakar would perhaps welcome a kind of Home Rule League in social matters to carry on a constant and wholesale propaganda. It is very necessary. We welcome this expanding life and see in it one more proof of a New India which is rising in our midst.

The *Indian Social Reformer*, so eminently conducted by K. Natarajan of undying esteem and reputation, observed in its editorial columns:

Mr. Jayakar referred to the intellectual restlessness which has over-spread the entire Hindu community, especially the less advanced sections of it leading them to, more and more, Brahmanise themselves, so to say, in the right sense of the term. It is a sign which we, the so-called higher caste, ought to welcome as pointing to the circumstance that, in spite of our persistence in a social system that treats certain communities as inferior and our desire to remain within the pale of its sanction, are yet willing to reform along the lines of its ideals. It is this social restlessness which I regard as the best evidence that the work of social reform during the last few decades has been fruitful. The rebelliousness of such social movements against the supremacy of the higher caste is only a temporary manifestation and is bound to disappear with

greater readiness on our part to admit the justice of the claims of equality of treatment.

The Marathi dailies of Bombay were equally favourable. For instance, the long established *Indu Prakash*, nearly a century old, and the aggressively nationalist paper *Sandesh*, gave equally friendly support to my views. The Bombay *Punch* (Hindi), conducted on the lines of the English *Punch* of Mark Lemon, published, in its usual way some interesting cartoons relating to my speech, three of which I am selecting for publication in this narrative. (See pp. 171-2.) It made the following comments on my speech:

So the Delegates of the Bombay Provincial Social Conference met at Nasik, that stronghold of Brahmanism and orthodoxy, where social progress and reform ideas move in a very narrow groove, where progress in social matters is far from general and where strict orthodoxy holds sway and rules with an iron hand. If their pilgrimage to the sacred city proves helpful in bringing the inhabitants of Nasik to a better frame of mind, the effect on the orthodox classes of the Presidency in general and of the city of Nasik in particular would be marvellous and the trouble they took to preach the cause of social reform and progress in that city, imbued with strict orthodoxy and stricter religious ideas, would not go in vain.

The eulogy of distinguished publicists was equally encouraging. Mrs. Besant wrote:

I have read with interest your admirable address to the Social Conference and I find myself in accord with it. I am very glad you have spoken out so clearly and bravely.

Chief Justice Scott of Bombay, observed:

Your address markedly differs from other addresses on similar occasions which I have read. The line you have adopted shows that you have courage, an important quality in one who accepts the position of a leader in a reform movement. I can foresee that your position is likely to be rendered difficult by older leaders who do not see eye to eye with you but you have evidently thought out the question of reform carefully and recognised that your line of action must appeal to reasonable men of the community and if you can convince your associates who, I think, represent many of the younger literates in Western India, that this is a necessary condition, I expect your movement will have better success than many of its predecessors.

Lallubhai Shah, a distinguished judge of the High Court and a quiet, modest, and deep student of social matters wrote:

I congratulate you upon your performance. Your address is very thoughtful and to a careful reader it brings home once more the stupendous nature of the work of a social reformer in India. I appreciate your criticism of the "timid counsels" that prevail in Bombay.

Narayan Chandavarkar wrote:

I am glad that you have made it clear that we cannot divide reform and progress into water-tight compartments and deal with political and social reform as two separate conditions of our national development. Both mean one and the same thing. Both act and re-act on each other.

In about June of that year the Government of Madras interned Mrs. Besant, George Arundale and B. P. Wadia. It caused a great sensation in India and in Bombay, which had been long preparing itself to take a forward step in the direction of Self-Government. It precipitated the attempt of some of us to start a movement boldly demanding "Home Rule", the word used, as shown above by one of the speakers moving the adoption of a scheme of Self-Government at the Lucknow Congress.

An entry in my diary of 17 June 1917 records that, as a result of the incarceration of Mrs. Besant and the other Madras leaders, a few of us, including Jinnah, met in the bungalow of Bahadurji, a member of the Bombay Bar. I may mention that Bahadurji, who unfortunately left us a few months ago, had always been regarded as a quiet, undemonstrative, stern and determined supporter of Indian freedom. This was a preliminary meeting of a few friends who felt the need of openly starting a movement for Home Rule without equivocation or disguise. At this meeting, preliminary discussions took place and further plans were matured at subsequent meetings and progress was so rapidly made, that within a month we found it necessary to frame a Constitution. This received further improvement at three subsequent meetings and on the death on 30 June 1917 of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, this inchoate Home Rule League was brought into service for arranging meetings lamenting the great leader's death. I had occasion to preside at one such



"IT WILL REQUIRE THE STRENGTH OF A GIANT"

MR M. R. JAYAKAR, the President of the Conference, was very eloquent over the woes of the Hindu joint family system and caste. As a budding barrister he has come across a number of cases arising out of the institution of joint family and the havoc created by it. He began hammering at the joints of the system and wanted to disjoint them. For the present, they remain as they are. It will require the strength of a giant and the joint efforts of a number of Jayakars to disjoint the joint system and consign it to the limbo of oblivion, and it will be years before Mr. PUNCH and the other social reformers will be able to congratulate Mr. Jayakar with the cheering hallelujah of "*Jaya Jayakar!*"

—From *Hindi Punch*, 27 May 1917

THE PILGRIMS AT THE SACRED WATERS OF THE GODAVERY

PANDIT PUNCHOBA OF NASIK (To the President of the Nasik Provincial Conference)—Tell all your social-reformer friends to have a dip in these sacred waters, sir. It will do them a world of good.

[The sittings of the Bombay Provincial Social Conference were held at Nasik on the 15th and 16th May, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Bar-at-Law, presiding.]



—From *Hindi Punch*, 27 May 1917



THE PATHARE PRABHUS: AN EXHORTATION!

SHADE OF MOROBA KANOBA. (To Mr. M. R. Jayakar, a Pathare Prabhu, who presided at the last Provincial Social Conference at Nasik)—Well done, Flower of thy race! For well nigh half a century after me, domestic Social Reform has been a thing untouchable to my literate moribund community. May thy campaign resolve into deeds palpable, Beta Makund Jayakar! Save thy race! Be victorious!

[The one valiant man in the exclusive, fast-shrinking Pathare Prabhu community, who married a widow and was persecuted, was the late Mr. Moroba Kanoba Vijayakar, Judge of the Bombay Small Causes Court, who with his consort passed away in 1871. Vide also observations of Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Bar-at-Law, on the voluntary Census Report of this community and his strong condemnation of their fatuous clannishness.]

—From *Hindi Punch*, Bombay, 3 June, 1917

meeting in Bombay and I used the occasion to propound the necessity of an organisation boldly proclaiming the message of Swaraj, which Dadabhai Naoroji had voiced with such strength and candour at the Calcutta session of the Congress in the year 1906.

My health had been badly undermined about this time. So, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of spending a few days at Bangalore, in the company of mutual friends, with M. Visvesvaraya, the esteemed and popular Dewan of Mysore. Visvesvaraya was, at this time, at the peak of his reputation as a constructive statesman of high and original conceptions, who had initiated, with prospects of great success, some schemes of harnessing the water-power of Mysore, as also some industrial projects, making full use of the agricultural and mineral wealth of Mysore.

It was a great opportunity to know, at close quarters, this great statesman, full of energy, initiative and a stern determination to pursue his schemes, regardless of the opposition of some persons who surrounded him. His determined attitude was an augury of the success which later attended his schemes. His life was exemplary of regularity, austere discipline, subdued and unostentatious friendliness, courtesy modulated by esteem, frankness by reticence and I gathered during my stay with him indelible lessons which I treasured up as very valuable. He was then at the height of his power and popularity, which he wielded with the cautious skill of an experienced statesman. My diary entries, some of which are quoted below, reveal the details of the important incidents with which our stay was filled:

- 18 September 1917: Reached Bangalore at 6.25. Put up at the delightful residence of Sir M. Visvesvaraya, Dewan of Mysore. The arrangements, the bungalow, the gardens are so neat, clean and tidy that I am taking a lot of points for my future residence at Warden Road in Bombay. The host was so full of work, so dignified, unobtrusive, considerate and solitary. We had, therefore, the whole day to ourselves. Motored out morning and evening. One of us explained to the host the motive of our visit and he understood the situation clearly.
- 22 September: Visited the Tata Institute—turned into a workshop for manufacturing things like acetone for Government use chiefly. Atmosphere chilling and of aversion. No desire to prepare students. The main object of the founder completely lost sight of. Large

amounts spent on Professors' houses, students' quarters like chawls. Met an intelligent Indian student who revealed the true state of things. The British Director anxious we should not talk to the students. Two other Britishers under him showed Departments perfunctorily to us. The Indian student showed liquid air and another Indian showed over Electrical Department. Took tea with the Indian student in his room. Met other students who confirmed the charges. Then visited the Government Sandal Wood Oil Factory. Met the Director. He was rude and offensive and did not like our visit. Long talk with the Dewan in the evening.

24 *September*: Left Bangalore for Sivasamudram in a car at 7. Reached at 11.30. Shown round by Chief Operator, Koushik, a clever and a spirited person. It is a marvel of Indian work—the tidiness of the place, the club, Co-operative Stores, model dwelling houses, absence of liquor shops and Resident Magistrate—all this showed the sympathetic and kind treatment given by the officials to the operatives and workmen. Saw the two Falls; one is in British territory and the other in Mysore. It compared very favourably with the one at British territory, which was dirty and unclean and the people ill-dressed and ill-fed. The contrast between the Mysore and the British Falls was marked. Left Sivasamudram at 4.30. Reached Mysore at 8. Put up in Dewan's residence, Lake View. Splendid residence. Almost English in arrangements.

25 *September*: At Mysore. Saw Seringapatam; Tipoo's tomb; pleasure gardens; fort; splendid relics. Then went to Kanambadi. Wonderful testimonial to Visvesvaraya's skill. All Indian talent. The works were bigger than Tata's Water Works at Lonavla and were entirely planned and carried out by Indians. No wonder that the White man feels jealous. Shown over by the Superintending Engineer, Mr. Garudachar. Had tea with him. Returned to Mysore at mid-day. In the evening Laxmana Rao, Chairman of the Mysore Municipality, showed us over the zoo, pleasure palace and other sights of the city. He looked quite a superior person, taking special interest in Town Planning and similar projects.

Left Bangalore on the 30th.

Immediately on my return to Bombay I had to take part in some important engagements. On 10 October, Mrs. Besant on her restoration to freedom arrived in Bombay. We gave her a very good reception at Bori Bunder. The crowd and enthusiasm were unbounded. On 12 October, there was an At Home given to her by two Home Rule Leaguers, Ratansi Dharamsi and Jamnadas Dwarkadas, both of whom at that time occupied prominent places in the Home Rule agitation. I include in this narrative a copy of a photograph taken on

the occasion of a meeting of the leading members. Many of the figures have passed away, but a few remain, who will always cherish most pleasant memories in their connection with the Home Rule League.

ON 9 November 1917, Mr. Montagu arrived in Bombay. A few days before his arrival, he had, as the Secretary of State for India, made an announcement in the House of Commons, on 20 August 1917. This was in accordance with the demand made at the Lucknow Congress. The announcement was as follows:

The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance, as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be, that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India. His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with His Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to India to discuss these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of Local Governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others.

I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility.

Ample opportunity will be afforded for public discussion of the proposals which will be submitted in due course to Parliament.

This was received in India as the most momentous utterance ever made in India's chequered history and the Maharashtrian leaders in their usual practical wisdom, particularly Tilak, were anxious to accept this announcement as containing the pledge of the British Government in the clearest terms to the adoption of a new policy towards the people of India. Speaking generally, liberal and advanced opinion in India was aware

of the colossal nature of the enterprise and of the immense possibilities of welfare or misery which hung upon its success or failure. It was further felt that the announcement marked the end of one epoch and could be the beginning of a new one. The leaders realised that hitherto India had been ruled by a system of absolute government and this announcement, if faithfully carried out and responded to in due measure by the public of India, would give her people an increasing share in the administration of the country and increasing opportunities of influencing and criticising the Government.

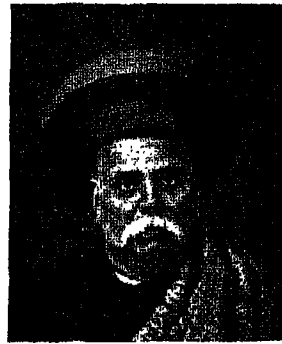
In accordance with the promise contained in this announcement, Mr. Montagu arrived in India. This visit was unprecedented and created a great stir amongst political circles in India. Representing, as stated above, the political wisdom of the Maharashtrian people, Tilak proposed to call a Conference at Lonavla in the Poona District early in January 1918 to declare an acceptance of this announcement and for subjecting it to such criticism as public opinion demanded. A few days after Mr. Montagu's arrival, we met in a conference at which Tilak asked me to accept the Presidency of this Conference at Lonavla called The Poona District Conference, stating that he had claims on my co-operation on the ground that I represented the views of the younger men and had, besides, a country residence at Lonavla. This was, in my life, the first offer of such important responsibility. I, therefore, tried to wriggle out of it, on the ground that I was too fresh and inexperienced in politics and did not possess the knowledge, experience and status which ought to belong to the President of such an important Conference held so soon after the recent stirring events in India. To this objection Tilak, with his characteristic regard for the younger generation, replied, indicating an attitude of which I always found him possessed. As my diary records, he said:

You are a lawyer always advancing the cause of your clients from the 'brief' handed over to you. To supply any deficiencies, as you say, of knowledge and information, I shall send you the brief which you may read to acquaint yourself with the responsibilities of the high office we are conferring on you as the President of this important Conference.

His request was made to me in such charming terms that it was impossible to say no and I accepted Tilak's offer



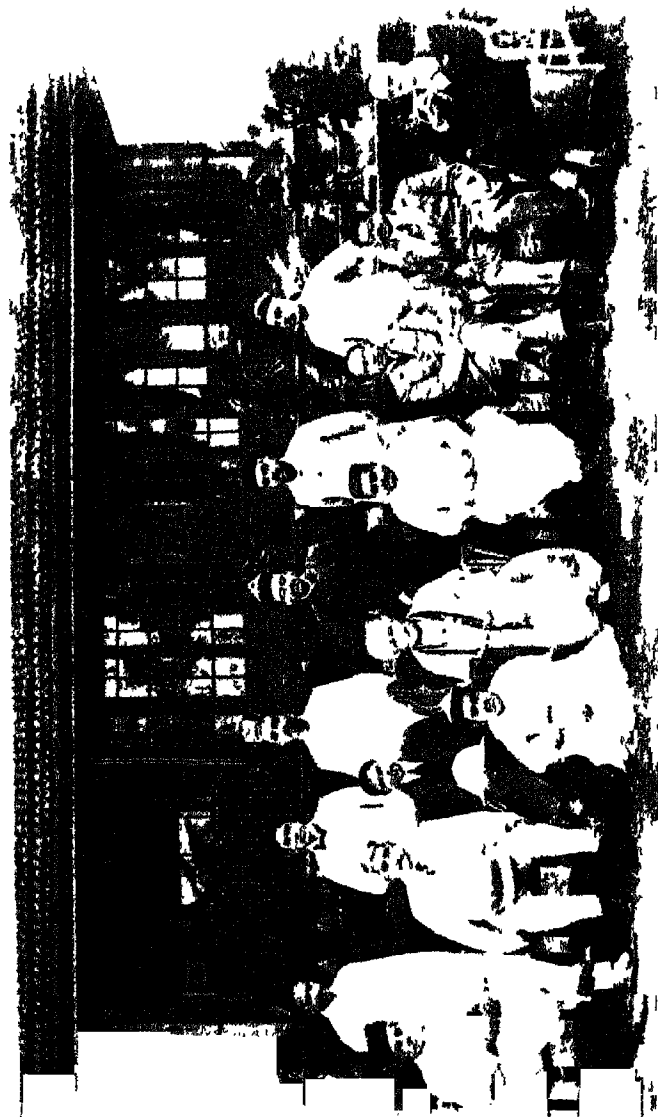
JAGANNATH SHANKARSETH



BHAU DAJI



GAJANAN BHASKAR VADYA



Meeting of the Home Rule League held in 1916 at Shanti Bhavan', residence of Narottam Morari Goculdas

On the ground KANJI DWARKADAS

Seated L to R UMAR SOBHANI, S R BOMANJI, M A JINNAH, MRS BESANT, JAMNADAS DWARKADAS, M R JAYAKAR

, B G HORNIMAN

Standing L to R S G BANKER, SYED HUSAIN

, RATANSI DHARAMSI, L R TAIRSEE,

to be the President of this Conference. Accordingly the Conference was held on 27 January 1918. Tilak, with other nationalist leaders, agreed to attend and take a prominent part in the conduct of this Conference. I had a garden house at Lonavla which I made the place of residence of the nationalist leaders during their short stay for the Conference. I, therefore, fitted up my bungalow with some simple conveniences these leaders would need, especially Tilak with whose daily habits I was fairly well-acquainted.

The Conference began on the 26th. There was a very large and representative gathering. Many incidents took place during Tilak's stay indicating his characteristic attitude of going a long way to win over young men to the cause which he had espoused. Tilak had the reputation of being a stern and unbending leader but, notwithstanding this characteristic, when he made up his mind to win over a young person, he could go to any length in friendliness and cordiality.

Lonavla is a pretty village which was noted for its dry and healthy weather in those days, before the Tatas invaded it and, by the plantation of their water works near the village, deprived it of these advantages. Many nationalist leaders were present and the village being only an hour's distance from Poona, it was possible for many old leaders of Maharashtra to attend the Conference. I made the principal speech. I reproduce a few extracts to indicate that I took particular care to suit it to the changed circumstances occasioned, among other factors, by Mr. Montagu's announcement and visit. I fully responded to Tilak's wish that, before contrary voices arose in the country, we should declare ourselves in favour of accepting Mr. Montagu's announcement despite its several deficiencies. Tilak was anxious that my speech should commit us to such acceptance, but not without reasonable criticism of what could be done to improve its consequences. I observed:

Notwithstanding the deficiencies of my youth and inexperience I have consented to accept the Chair on this occasion in the belief that I would voice the aspirations of the rising generation in a manner which older leaders might not so well succeed in doing.

Perhaps another advantage which I possess is the fact that I am a non-Brahman. In these days when good and bad critics have been clamouring that our national agitation is a purely Brahman device to set up a Brahman oligarchy, it might well be that these conferences

should have as Chairman a person who does not belong to the Brahman community.

I then proceeded to say that since the last Conference at Nasik, an important landmark for Maharashtra, two significant events had happened. The first was the announcement by Mr. Montagu in Parliament.

I am well aware of the several reservations that characterise that pronouncement and, as some critics say, the halting limitations with which its enthusiasm has been circumscribed; still it cannot be denied that there is a great significance about that pronouncement, especially in the circumstance that it is the result of prolonged deliberations on the part of the British Cabinet, the Secretary of State for India, and India's Viceroy in Council. It therefore represents the combined result of the deliberations of these three repositories of power. Another advantage is that the pronouncement is not a promise in the air, but proceeds to lay down the practical steps by which the goal is to be reached. An important step has thus been gained by Indian patriots, in so far as this announcement lays down, for the acceptance of the Indian Civil Service, the duty of not merely attempting, as they have hitherto been doing, a hypothetical efficiency in the administration of the country, but that, in addition thereto, it will be their duty and task and also I hope their ideal to train the people to become a self-governing community. This deprives the Indian Civil Service of the excuse which it has often used under the present regime, that their duty towards the Indian people lay only in the direction of maintaining a high standard of efficiency in the administration of the country, but that, beyond this, they were not bound, under the obligations of their office, to do anything in the way of preparing the people for assuming ultimately the responsibility of governing themselves.

The other important event is the visit of Mr. Montagu to this country to ascertain the views of the peoples as to the stages, if any, by which the goal of Self-Government is to be reached.

When these important changes are taking place around us, it is material to ask what is the true nature of our demand for Self-Government? This is not quite an idle inquiry, for there are some people, though few, who have not fully realised the meaning and significance of this claim. We must, therefore, clarify our notions and try and approximate them to a common understanding, so that no time will be wasted in raising differences about our common ideal. The first thing to remember, in this connection, is that Self-Government is only a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The end is the fullest development of the stature of Indian manhood and full provision for all the faculties and powers of which the Indian people are possessed. This being the end, we regard Self-Government as providing the most

congenial and favourable environment to secure the accomplishment of this end. It is a birth-right in the sense that freedom provides the most natural atmosphere for a nation's self-realisation. It is not, as is supposed by certain sections of Indians and Europeans, a hunt for places, not even for the loaves and fishes of Government patronage. Nor is it a mere change of personnel, a replacement of a European by an Indian bureaucracy; it is a complete change of the policy and ideals of British administration in India from the ideals and methods hitherto pursued. Efficiency, order and peace used to be its ideals up to now but India has fully realised that efficiency is a mischievous goal if it involves the dwarfing and destruction of the inborn faculties of the governed classes, due to their exclusion from all responsible participation in the administration of the country. Efficiency can be and has been made a fetish. The new ideal emerging as a result of our agitation is to train the people to become a self-governing and self-defending unit with the least possible delay.

Boldly using the words Home Rule, I explained its implications:

Again Home Rule or Self-Government is a struggle to have the direction of affairs in our hands. It is on the principle that we the people understand best how our progress should be made and what is best for us. We want liberty to lay down and work out our own ideals of culture and progress, and, provided that these are secured, we shall be grateful for all the assistance and co-operation which right-minded Englishmen and Englishwomen will give us in the accomplishment of our task. We seek Home Rule also because we feel that it is the best means of doing away with the obsession of centuries that we are an inferior race, inherently inferior to the European races, and incapable of managing our affairs. This suggestion has been dinned into our ears for a long time and we are aware of the harm that a long continued suggestion may do to the mind which receives it.

Referring to the few discordant voices raised at that time I observed:

It is consequently a matter of some regret, though it is not at all surprising in a vast country like India, that a few discordant voices have been raised against our demand.

I then dealt with the internal differences of the several castes and sub-castes of the Hindu community like, for instance, Brahmans against Non-Brahmans, Lingayats against Non-Lingavats. I added in this connection that our message

to such communities is to beware that they do not allow themselves to be used by our reactionary opponents for the purpose of checking our political progress.

I then dealt with the hostile cry raised by the British residents, accustomed so far to be the determining voice in the progress of the country, and I then referred to the remark of Sir William Vincent of the Government of India asking Indians, on behalf of the Indian Civil Service, to remember that, unlike in Japan and China, British capital had been sunk in India on the distinct understanding that the administration of India would be British in character. With reference to this bold claim, I asked the following questions:

- 1) When was the understanding arrived at?
- 2) Why was it necessary in India if it was not necessary in countries like China and Japan?
- 3) Were the Indian people parties to this understanding, if not, who gave the consent on their behalf?
- 4) Is not this understanding opposed to the most solemn pledges of the Sovereign and Parliament of Great Britain, opposed likewise to the ultimate well-being of the Indian people? If so, is the understanding irrevocable and binding for all time?
- 5) What is the true nature of the understanding?
- 6) If it is that the so-called British character of the administration must be maintained, then is it a question of race and colour or of the possession of certain qualities which have been popularly identified with the British character? Does it mean that colour must always prevail over quality? Does it mean that an Indian, however well-possessed of the qualities summed up in the term 'British character', must always be debarred and the European is always to be a privileged person even if he may not be in possession of such qualities though British born?

We believe that the character called British is the result of training and environment and is in no way connected with complexion, and that a European degenerates as fast and as hopelessly as an oriental in an irresponsible environment. This claim, therefore, I said, is unjustifiable and cannot be allowed. I added that this claim is not different from the claim which was set up, some time ago, in England on behalf of the capitalists as against the common people of Great Britain. With reference to this claim Lord Acton wisely remarked: "The people have by reason of the higher class of their happiness and prosperity a larger stake in the country than

a few capitalists."

I proceeded as follows:

May we, however, ask, what reason there is to apprehend, in the proposed form of Government, the absence of peace and security arising from the mere circumstance that an Indian element will be associated with the Government? Is it the experience of the Government that Indian officials, so far as they have been associated with the administration of this country, have proved so hopelessly lacking in the qualities that make for good Government, that directly their numbers are increased it must sound the death-knell of all the features which make the Government steady, firm, solvent and responsible? The real basis of the British claim which must be repudiated is a selfish desire to maintain permanently their domination in this country. The Britisher must be told to get himself gradually accustomed to occupy his proper place in the future scheme of Indian administration.

I then repudiated the boasted identity of interest between the British official and the Indian masses.

In describing what we have to do in order to produce the moral atmosphere conducive to the growth of Self-Government at an early date, I mentioned a few pleas.

The foremost requirement is the endeavour to make it clear to the opponents of reform in this country and to the British democracy in England, not by professions but by action, that our claim to Self-Government is the result of a genuine popular awakening, that the Indian people are in earnest in claiming to manage their own affairs. We must also insist that our fight is against irresponsible authority and slavish reverence for it. To show our sincerity in this matter we must carry on the fight not only in the department of politics but in every other department, social or religious, where similar slavishness exists. Further, we must take our banner to the villages, to the poor and illiterate classes, remembering that politics to these classes has no meaning except as it brings to them more comfort, more happiness, better sanitation, more education, in short a cleaner and fuller life. It will be necessary to produce a feeling of self-confidence in the people, a feeling of hope and confidence in the capacity of their race. Let us remember what Gokhale once said, that we Indians have to live perpetually in an atmosphere of inferiority. This can be changed only by a different teaching and a different environment, secured for our children at an early age. Our main charge against the present administration is that it puts a permanent stamp of mediocrity and inferiority on all men of Indian birth, irrespective of their qualifications and status and that the whole system of training has been so devised

as to encourage the growth of inferior talent. While there is scope in this country for the employment of high-class talent, very little use is made of it. The British bureaucrat is trained to believe as an axiomatic principle that their first object is to govern and next to govern well. We see signs everywhere, indicating that British India is not a fit place for the development of this spirit of self-confidence. We have to go outside to places like Mysore to make our observation and revive our faith. A single visit to a place like the Falls of Sivasamudram in Mysore will indicate how the most gigantic enterprise can be run by Indian agencies.

This must be coupled with another requisite necessary for the speedy acquisition of a truly national spirit and the development of what one may call a political temper. We are new to the complex phenomena of political life. Therefore, it often happens that personal courtesy and friendliness shown by officials to us overshadow our abhorrence of the system of Government. Friendliness in political life has its use, e.g. in tempering the acerbity of political strife, and producing sweet reasonableness which lubricates political opposition, but the effects of courtesy and friendliness it will be foolish to carry so far as to be induced to abandon the chief features of our struggle. Our behaviour on this question stands in strong contrast to the British temper as shown by the habitual attitude of the official members of the legislative bodies, where personal friendship or social amenities are never allowed to divert the course, temper or firmness of a settled policy. As we go along this path, it will be necessary to acquire the habit of mind which refuses to accentuate differences and insists, in the larger interest of the country, upon emphasizing our points of agreement. We want for our cause all the available talent, enthusiasm and exertions of the country to be united in opposition to certain well-arrayed forces working against our scheme.

I reminded my audience that, speaking at Elphinstone College, Bombay, in commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of Queen Victoria, Ranade, as an Old Elphinstonian, said:

There is a moral element at the base of all this display of force [of the British power] and it is the triumph of a moral principle which alone has the power to move the hearts of millions in one unison with the loyal and grateful sentiment. It is this moral principle which is the source of British greatness and its armour and protection. It is also this moral element that inspires hope and confidence in the colonies and Dependencies of Great Britain that, whatever temporary disturbances may cloud the judgement, the reign of law will assert itself. There are, of course, ups and downs, temporary disturbances and even storms, but those only will serve to bring into greater relief the calm majesty of the law overriding power and opposition.

The Lonavla Conference was a great success and was an exquisite assertion of the political tenets of Maharashtra, professed since the days of Ranade, Tilak and Gokhale, all of whom, in spite of their political differences, agreed in the assertion of the policy described briefly as, "Accept what you get and fight for the rest." It represented the inherited traditions and collective wisdom of Maharashtra and its prevailing spirit in political affairs. Unfortunately, in later times, in the hey-day of the non-co-operation regime, it was superseded by another policy, which can be briefly summed up in words like, "Unless you get everything you want, reject the offer." The later conflict between these two doctrines and its fear-reaching effect on Indian politics will be narrated in a subsequent chapter.

The success of the Conference lay in the fact that it caught and moulded public opinion just when hostile cries were rising in certain quarters against the acceptance of Mr. Montagu's declaration. The Maharashtrian school of politicians were anxious that, despite its deficiencies which could be rectified later, the announcement should not be totally rejected. These deficiencies arose, for example, from the sentiment, expressed in the announcement, that the responsibility for the welfare and the advancement of the Indian people lay on the British Government and it is this Government that must be the judge of the time and measure of each advance. It was urged against this sentiment that a nation's rise to freedom is not to be judged on the principles which relate to the promotion of school students from standard to standard, based upon their progress during the year. On this ground, in some quarters in India the rejection of this announcement was advocated and consequently the Maharashtrian leaders desired to train and guide public opinion towards the acceptance of this announcement and in this effort the Lonavla Conference can be said to have succeeded beyond expectation.

After my speech, Tilak addressed the Conference and later Kelkar.

Tilak's speech on the occasion was quite characteristic. Lonavla was selected, he said, because it was in the Maval Taluka of the Poona District. This was an appropriate selection, for Shivaji Maharaja spread his message of freedom over the country with the aid of the stalwart fighters of Maval and their qualities of patriotism, courage, endurance,

unity and loyalty. These qualities, he added, existed even now and could be utilised again for similar deeds of valour and sacrifice, if the Government was minded to do so.

The main resolution of the Conference demanding Swaraj and extending support to Mr. Montagu's announcement was passed with acclamation and thus the chief object of the Conference succeeded beyond measure.

The English and Marathi Press in Bombay and Maharashtra supported the Conference and applauded the views I propounded in my speech. A Marathi Daily of Bombay, *Sandesh*, then held in great esteem specially amongst Brahman circles, observed as follows about my reference to my non-Brahman extraction:

Mr. Jayakar modestly calls himself a non-Brahman but these terms are now merely indicative of the social order; but speaking for ourselves, we regard as a Brahman every leader who proclaims Home Rule, whether he be a *Brahman* or *Kshatriya* or a representative of the *Mahars* or even a *Mahar* in his own birth. If there is any national activity in which caste differences deserve to be completely obliterated, it is the field of patriotic service for the country.

It was about this time that public attention in Bombay and the surrounding Marathi-speaking districts was engaged in spreading widely the knowledge and practice of Hindustani music. These areas showed greater appreciation of Hindustani music than of South Indian music, for one thing because Hindustani music was, in their opinion, a direct and more faithful descendant of the systems and modes propounded in ancient Sanskrit works. It was likewise less adulterated by local varieties and modes than in the South. The tradition in favour of Hindustani music had continued uninterrupted in the Marathi-speaking districts and many eminent *ustads* (experts) had, for a long time, devoted their lives to its study and practice. In Bombay itself, many famous men and women singers had attained great proficiency in this art, both instrumental and vocal, and its knowledge became common amongst Hindu and Muslim singers, so much indeed that Muslim teachers boasted of Hindu disciples and vice versa. It was a strange phenomenon that Muslim singers, typically so in their dress and habits, daily sang with deep devotion ancient songs, written in honour of Hindu gods and goddesses. Muslims and

Hindus lost their sense of caste and religious distinctions in their common devotion to this art and I always recall with delight the following instance of this identification.

On one occasion a typical Muslim singer sang to me, with passionate devotion, an ancient song in honour of Krishna, showing, at frequent intervals, his great devotion to the hero of the song, at times making a gesture as if rushing forward to meet him. After the song was over, I asked him, "Khan Sahib, whom did you see before you when you sang with eyes closed and a reverent expression on your face, with an occasional tear dropping down?" He said, "I saw Krishna in imagination—the theme of my song." I replied with a view to teasing him, "What, you saw as in a dream Krishna, the God of Hindus?" With suppressed resentment he turned to me and said, "Sir, why do you call Krishna the God of the Hindus? He is not the God of the Hindus any more than of the Muslims. He is the God of all who sing of his glories out of devotion and in my family we have been doing so for several generations." I then apologised to him in great admiration of the non-sectarian spirit of this great artist.

This experience was by no means uncommon and when I mentioned it to C. R. Das he frequently referred to it, when addressing meetings on Hindu-Muslim unity. He spoke of music as the best means of attaining it. In such an atmosphere, the cultivation of Hindustani music had gone on for years in this part of the country.

In my youth, I had heard a few of the great exponents of Hindustani music, both Hindu and Muslim—men and women—and I always thought that the Muslim, by his racial attribute of steadfastness, generally brought greater devotion, finesse and delicacy to the practice of his art than his Hindu colleague. We revered both of them equally and, gradually, came to distinguish music from different parts of India, each varying, within permissible limits, the original pattern of the ancient *Rag*. In the Deccan, for instance, the school of the Indian State Ichalkaranji attained pre-eminence, through a famous expert, Balkrishna Buva, who was generally associated with an equally famous player on the Mridang (drum) who had a wide circle of disciples all over the Deccan. Speaking of the north, in my time, the schools of Gwalior, Delhi, Agra and later, Indore and Baroda rose to distinction and even now one can read interesting accounts and anecdotes of these

great singers, which are regularly published in a monthly Marathi magazine called *Sangit Kala Vihar*. It is impossible and perhaps unnecessary to recall here the names of all these great singers whom I knew in my time but it is permissible to mention a few names. The famous experts of Hindustani music in my time in this part of the country among Hindus were Balkrishna Buva, Bhaskar Buva, Ramkrishna Buva Vaze, Vishnu Digambar and Bhatkhande, not to mention popular stage singers, amongst whom Narayanrao Rajahansa (popularly called Balgandharva) and Bhaurao Kolhatkar rose to the top. Amongst Muslims were Alladiya Khan and Rahimat Khan, the doyens amongst singers, closely followed by Miyajan and later by Faiyaz and Abdul Karim, the latter famous for bringing into vogue a delicate admixture of classical music and popular varieties. Speaking of the latter, the style was successfully and ingeniously woven with indigenous music by the great Amir Khusru of Emperor Akbar's time. Amir Khusru was the divine originator of this exquisite union. In my time Vaze Buva used this method with exquisite success. Amongst women singers of those times, there were many renowned names now forgotten, except Krishni Zulpi-wali, so named from the curls in which she used to deck her hair. A younger girl called Chunna, a disciple of the famous Veena player Bande Ali (mentioned below), sparkled for a time on the musical horizon; but, speaking generally, women singers of eminence disappeared more rapidly than men singers, and the few exponents now left amongst us to indicate their wonted excellence are Kesarbai Kerkar and one or two younger singers, Gangubai and Moghubai, who fortunately are still amongst us. Among instrumentalists, I knew a few great ones in my time. The best perhaps was a Veena (been) player, Bande Ali, a genius in his own way and, like some geniuses, most erratic, often causing consternation at music parties which did not reach his notions of knowledge or silent attention. His disciple Murad Khan rose to distinction. These names are now mostly forgotten, though some have been more fortunate in keeping their fame alive like, for instance, Hafiz Khan the Sarod player of Gwalior and Bundu Khan of Indore, whose skill on the Sarangi is matchless. The credit of pioneer work done for the spread of the knowledge and study of classical music belongs to Vishnupant Bhatkhande and Vishnu Digambar. The latter did most meritorious

work in North India, specially the Punjab, in training young men in scientific classical music and Bhatkhande's graduated series of books holds the field even now.

It is often popularly observed that Indian music has made rapid progress in recent times but this is so only in the limited sense that the base of studies in classical music has been widened, but it is regrettable that this is so at the cost of the ancient height, which remains unattained, very much like Mount Everest, until recently the despair of adventurous spirits.

To remove some widespread deficiencies in Hindustani music, a representative Conference was held in Bombay on 9 March 1918 under the auspices of the then well-known *Gandharva Mahavidyalaya*, founded and made eminently successful by the great efforts of Vishnu Digambar. The Conference was the first of its kind in Bombay and the Presidentship fell to me because of my known interest in Hindustani music. The Conference had drawn most of the famous singers of India, and the prosperous condition of the institution at that time enabled it to make excellent arrangements for the reception and accommodation of the guests. The music-loving connoisseurs of Bombay were present and amongst them were a large number of Parsi patrons of Indian music.

The Bombay Press, Indian and British, gave the Conference an excellent reception.

In the speech I made on the occasion as President, I advised a historical study of Indian music, and warned the public against a cheap imitation of European music. I suggested the foundation of an institution in Bombay, which would serve as an asylum for needy musicians from any part of India, and that all the songs popularly current should be published in their original purity. In conclusion I warned the younger musicians to preserve the purity of a trained and unvitiated ear so necessary in Indian music, where we have no aids like tuning forks to set the correct note.

A typical press comment on my speech was as follows:

Mr. Jayakar's rejection of European music is sure of some support. We notice worthy and educated Indians of all classes and creeds listening by hundreds of an evening to the degraded and unclassical strains of a brass band playing "If you were the only girl in the world," or

"When the midnight Choo-Choo starts for Alaban." Also, it is an extremely common thing in Bombay for Indians to hire European music for weddings. Even the cheap three-man native band with a cornet, a clarionet and a drum plays some quaint, simple old echo of the British past like "Sweet Dreamland Faces" or "White Wings" as it heads some middle-class bridal procession or serenades in the bridegroom's garden. If these things go on, we fear for the future of Indian music as advocated by Mr. Jayakar. Mrs. Besant recently deplored that the advent of the European had resulted in certain native women using ugly kerosene tins as water carriers, instead of the beautiful and artistic native *lothas*.

With the desire to rejuvenate Hindustani music by Conferences like the one mentioned above, attempts began to be made to put new life into the dramatic tradition of Maharashtra. Maharashtra's regard for Hindustani music has already been mentioned above, but Maharashtra had been for a very long time an important centre for popularising plays and dramas. Lyrical plays were made popular by the inclusion of songs and they had been patronized by Maharashtra for a long time. The first attempts of this kind were made about the year 1879 by a playwright of Bombay called Trilokekar and by another dramatist Anna Martand Joshi, also of Bombay. The effort was taken up a year later by another popular writer of Maharashtra called Kirloskar. I can recall attending the first performances of these plays as a student. A little later, at College gatherings, were staged amateur performances of the plays of Kalidas and Bhavabhuti. Love for such plays increased rapidly in my time. I myself took part in a play and frequently contributed comments to one or two papers in Bombay as a stage critic. My comments related to the performances of some well-known popular actors and my contributions had in consequence to be anonymous. I had thus the advantage of studying intimately the growth of the Marathi stage in Bombay and in Poona which were the two important centres of such activity. Accordingly, when Maharashtra decided to have a *Natya Sammelan* (Theatrical Conference), the fourteenth in a series, I was elected its Chairman and we celebrated the conference in Poona on 27 May 1918. It had attracted a large number of eminent playwrights from Maharashtra. Kelkar made the introductory speech. The enthusiasm was admirable and in the course of my speech I made several suggestions for the improvement

of the Marathi stage. This was a very important era in its growth and I am able to recall with pleasure that many of the suggestions made by me and other speakers were utilised for the subsequent improvement of the Marathi stage. I advised the professional actors of Maharashtra to drop their habit of appearing singular in their ways and deportment and bring them into accord with the ways and habits of the ordinary run of literary men, taking no pleasure in isolating themselves by the oddity of their behaviour. More contact must grow, I advised, between plays and other forms of Marathi literature. I reminded the conference of the high traditions of Sanskrit plays. The plays of Kalidas used to be in ancient times staged in royal palaces and some of the inmates of these palaces took part in the performances. In those days, as ancient classics prove, women acted on the stage, representing women characters. Indian culture, I said, is still powerful and the theatre as an important section must rise to its expected height. Modern plays must not only be staged for the sake of amusement but also as indicative of the heritage of India. In Bombay, there existed during my childhood an amateur company manned by lawyers, solicitors and others equally high in social life who staged Horace Wilson's version of *Shakuntala* and *Vikramorvashtya*. The Company enjoyed great patronage for several years, mostly from the British residents in Bombay, to whom these plays were a great revelation of ancient Indian culture.

I made at the Conference definite suggestions for the improvement of the stage and the life of the actors. For instance:

- (1) A provident fund should be started for the benefit of impecunious actors and a carefully compiled directory noting their addresses and their requirements should be prepared.
- (2) A central Mandal should be started to keep intimate contact with actors in several parts of Maharashtra.
- (3) A club should be started where actors and other literary men would meet regularly to increase mutual contact.
- (4) Senior actors should train the younger generation, the need of which had increased with the inclusion of songs—a feature unknown to previous times.
- (5) The Club should hold classes periodically for imparting

instruction to younger actors.

(6) A Library should be collected of all works—ancient and modern—written in Sanskrit or any other Indian language.

I asked the conference to forget the prejudices against actors and admit them to social contact.

The last suggestion which I made was that as many boys now took parts on the stage, it should be the duty of the senior men of the theatrical companies to look after their morals. Theatrical surroundings are proverbially open to impure influences. It should, therefore, be the duty of the managers to keep these boys away from such temptations.

In my concluding speech I mentioned the great transition from the days of Kalidas. During his time, the stage was purer and simpler. Many of the present-day artificial devices were unknown. It was, therefore, necessary, I said, to revive its pristine simplicity and purity.

Many of the suggestions made at the conference were carried out and one could see that the plays staged later became increasingly free from the blemishes noticed at this conference. The people of Maharashtra have been extremely fond of the theatre and Bombay and Poona have been the two important centres. During recent times some of the best actors of Maharashtra have helped public causes by having benefit-night performances and I can recall one recent case where a fund of Rs. 50,000 was collected for the benefit of a Marathi Library in Bombay.

IMPORTANT events were happening in India from April to June 1918. The appeal of the Government was that leaders like Gandhi, Tilak and Mrs. Besant should secure unstinted support to the war effort. To that, the reply of these leaders was that they would be most willing to do so, provided an unqualified assurance was given that, after the war, India would obtain its much-coveted freedom. A large amount of correspondence went on in the press, but eventually the attempts of the Nationalist leaders proved unsuccessful in getting such an assurance from the British Government. Things developed in this way until, on 10 June 1918 a conference was held in the Town Hall of Bombay to push forward the cause of the war. Many Nationalist leaders had

received invitations to attend this Conference but it appeared that Government relied for support mainly on certain loyal groups like the Rulers of Indian States, who utilised the occasion to proclaim their loyalty with ostentation unsuited to the grim purposes of the war. Tilak had received no invitation to attend a War Conference previously held in Delhi but Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay, repaired that mistake and Tilak and the Home Rule Leaguers attended the Bombay Conference. The popular leaders had already intimated to the Government that they would like to take part and even to make speeches and for this purpose they desired to have a copy of the agenda. Mr. Crerar, a strong I. C. S. official of those times, who later had to drop his superior ways when transferred to Delhi, replied that a copy of the agenda would be sent when it was ready but that outside speeches would be permitted only after the selected speeches fixed beforehand were delivered, and that the Government would then decide whom they would permit to speak and what resolutions would be allowed. The result was that Tilak did not send any proposals. After the loyal speeches were over, Tilak was called upon to address the Conference. He stated that he had not tabled any proposals because there was no permission to do so, but that he would like to state before the Conference the popular view of the matter. He made a short but very effective speech, pointing out that in the past, when the freedom of India was in danger owing to attacks of foreigners from outside, the people of India defended their country and they would do so likewise on this occasion; but the connection between the popular desire for freedom and the people going in for the protection of the country was intimate and could not be ignored. Scarcely had Tilak said this when the Governor in the Chair stopped his speech, adding that no political matters would be allowed at the Conference. Tilak replied "If that is your ruling, the only course open to a self-respecting Indian is to leave the Conference," and, so saying, he left. Other Nationalist leaders were then called upon to speak but they made it clear that the cause of the war would not create any enthusiasm unless people were assured that their full co-operation would be met later by the grant of self-government to India. So saying, they all left.

A significant entry in my diary on 11 June says:

War Conference ended owing to Governor's indiscreet speech upbraiding the Home Rule League leaders. The next day the Home Rule Leaguers explained in a public statement why they had left the conference and had decided not to attend any further meetings where Lord Willingdon would be in the Chair. Some of us removed our names from the Committees which had been appointed for the purpose of securing support for the war effort.

My diary entry of the 11 June continues:

I was fixed to speak at the public meeting this day for supporting the war effort but I refused to speak, having regard to what had happened the previous day and the autocratic behaviour of Lord Willingdon.

Like me, several other Home Rule Leaguers expressed their unwillingness to have anything to do with this public meeting—an exception was Bhulabhai Desai who was persuaded to attend. My diary entry of 12 June says that Desai made a speech condemning the attitude of his former associates. Setalvad's version of this incident in his recollections is as follows:

Tilak who wanted to give conditional support to the war was not allowed to speak and as a result he, together with his friends, walked out of the meeting. Some time thereafter a meeting was to be held regarding the South African question presided over by Lord Willingdon and invitations were sent to four persons representing the Bombay Home Rule League, viz. Jinnah, Jayakar, Bhulabhai Desai and Horniman, to speak on the occasion. At the meeting of the Committee of the Home Rule League, it was decided that, as a protest against the action of Lord Willingdon in not allowing Tilak to speak at the previous meeting, none of the Home Rule leaders should attend the meeting. As a result of this, Bhulabhai Desai resigned his membership of the League and attended the meeting and took part in it.

The same day a large public meeting was held at the usual place, Shantaram's Chawl, at which the Home Rule Leaguers made clear their reason for leaving the War Conference and their subsequent refusal to participate in such conferences. Gandhi presided at this public meeting and condemned the attitude of Lord Willingdon. His behaviour, Gandhi said, was illiberal and reproachable. To offer such an affront to Tilak is to ruin the cause of the War. Tilak observed:

The Government calls us insincere but I have a good deal of proof that the charges are more true of Government than of us, and who will help the Government if the possibility is clear that after the war the fetters on the country would be tightened and not relaxed? If the Government promise to appoint Indians in high places in the Army, I undertake immediately to obtain 5,000 recruits and if I do not succeed in doing so, I will pay a penalty of Rs. 100 for each failure to obtain this number and I am prepared to place Rs. 50,000 in the hands of Gandhi as a guarantee for this offer.

The presence of Mrs. Besant in Bombay a few days previous to this event had galvanized Bombay. She then suggested that, having regard to the propitious times in England, a deputation of the Home Rule Leaguers should be sent there and accordingly on 14 January I received from her the following letter:

'New India'
Post Box 30
Madras, 24th Jan., 1919

Dear Mr. Jayakar,

You said to me at Delhi that you were willing to join the Congress Deputation. Many of us cannot go on that because of the rigid limitation imposed on the delegates and the exclusion of all negotiations on my draft Bill. Hence we prefer the Home Rule Deputation. Are you willing to join this? I enclose a list of those who have, so far, agreed to join and some others are likely to follow. Will you also come with us? I shall reach Bombay on the 29th and I hope to meet there the leaders of the Home Rule League. My letters are often delayed but if you receive this on the 26th as you should, you might wire a reply.

Sincerely yours,
Annie Besant

With the letter came a list of those who formed the proposed Home Rule League Deputation: The Raja of Mahamudabad, Hasan Imam, Vyankatpatti, Bhurgri, B. V. Narsamaier, Jinnah, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, P. K. Telang, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Syed Hussein and Mrs. Besant.

My diary states that on 11 February a meeting took place of the Managing Committee of the Home Rule League and a Deputation was selected and I was elected to be a member of the Deputation.

The internment order against Mrs. Besant by the Madras Government had endeared her to the people and of several public meetings held in Bombay to condemn the action of the Government, I shall recall two, at both of which I was in the Chair, where strong resolutions condemning the internment order against Mrs. Besant by the Madras Government were passed. After paying tribute to Mrs. Besant's services to the country, I ended my speech with the observation:

It is obvious that the period through which we are passing is full of hardships to those who would valiantly oppose the encroachment of official injustice. With all power and patronage on one side and public opinion feeble and timid on the other, the lot of the brave public workers is full of pains and penalties and perhaps it is as well that it should be so in order that none but those who have trained themselves to bear personal hardships, vile calumnies and even physical sufferings might be drawn into the conflict which would assume great sanctity for their descent into the arena.

Referring to Mrs. Besant's past services I added:

She has been privileged to enter a fight and suffer in the contest. We all congratulate her and rejoice that her life so full of useful work should have reached this culmination of sacrifice for our sake.

Amongst her services, I mentioned prominently the fact that she had lured back hundreds of young men from the precipitous height of lawlessness and crime and had exercised her influence in the cause of discipline and order. I added that to remove such a person by the unjust and illegal exercise of a pure war measure is to open the flood gates of unrest and disloyalty.

Mrs. Besant continued her activities and delivered some useful speeches. I find from the entry in my diary on 25 September 1918 that she delivered a powerful speech, in the course of which she said that the effect of the war had affected human evolution. She asked what the effect of this world war would be on human evolution if they looked at the broken and mutilated hearts of the blind and the maimed. A spectacle like that which the world presents at present has a depressing effect but to those who can look into the future, death had no sting. Human civilization grew by sacrifice. She saw in the war not a tragedy but a splendid sacrifice.

That was the value of this war and that is why the war should not end until the aims and ideals, for which thousands of the sons of the Empire had willingly sacrificed themselves, were realised. All the sacrifices would go in vain if there was a premature peace. Those who had laid down their lives in the cause of human civilization would help to build up a new and nobler civilization, but their task would be harder if those in this world were not strong and firm enough to continue their efforts until the ideal for which they were fighting was achieved. This was a war for ideals. It was like a furnace in which gold was being purified. In this world, there was reason for every apparent tragedy. Good inevitably lasted and the end of sorrow was joy.

On 17 February my diary entry states:

Meeting at *Shanti Bhavan* of Narottam Morarji with Mrs. Besant present. Jinnah backed out of the League deputation. I had counted upon his co-operation and felt sure of his loyalty. I, therefore, hesitated. Ultimately a few names were fixed but I could see that it would be difficult for this group to give each other loyal co-operation and I ultimately felt that Jinnah was not unwise in declining to go. For the same reason I declined.

The diary entry ends by saying:

The proceedings at this Conference, notwithstanding Mrs. Besant's presence, were extremely disappointing.

Different was the fate of Tilak's efforts to collect a few men of his confidence to go to England also on deputation. His deputation was on behalf of his branch of the Home Rule League. There was besides a third deputation on behalf of the Congress. The immediate effect of Montagu's announcement was so great that all these three bodies simultaneously thought it necessary to send deputations to England. Tilak made a most resolute effort to obtain his men. I still recall his wonderful effort to win me over.

During the years 1917-1919 I had occasion to attend and take part in three consecutive sessions of the Congress. But perhaps the most important of them all was the one held at Calcutta from 26 to 29 December 1917. Mr. Montagu's announcement and his visit to India had quickened India's desire to clarify and enlarge its political demands, and the

first Congress session held after these events, important from this point of view, was the one held at Calcutta at the end of 1917.

Nearly all prominent leaders were present and the communal reconciliation begun at Lucknow was carried a step further at this session. Mrs. Besant after her internment had as stated above returned to political life and she was in consequence most appropriately elected President of this session. We all felt that it was a momentous session. In the history of the Congress it had never been confronted with graver and more difficult problems and we felt that our responsibilities had correspondingly grown heavier. Since its inauguration thirty-two years earlier, as a small and unpretentious organisation for focussing official attention upon Indian grievances, and also during the whole period of its adolescence, the Congress had never had to tackle more momentous, more complicated and more perplexing questions fraught with immense possibilities affecting the destinies of the people. We all felt that our fate was in the making and that our future would largely depend upon our deliberations at this session and our activities thereafter.

In consonance with the gravity and solemnity of the occasion, the session began with the recitation of a Vedic song, which used to be in the nature of a Convocation Address delivered in those times to the students after their studies under the guidance of the Vedic preceptor, were over. Its translation is as follows:

*United in progress and in speech,
Let your minds apprehend alike,
Alike in counsel and in prayer,
Alike in feelings and in thought,
Be ye one in your aspirations and your desires;
And may your minds be drawn together to
bear with one another.*

After the usual *Vande Mataram* song had been recited, Rabindranath Tagore read out his opening Invocation, as follows:

*Thou hast given us to live.
Let us uphold this honour with all our strength and will,
For Thy glory rests upon the glory that we are.*

Therefore, in Thy name, we oppose the power
 that would plant its banner upon our soul.
 Let us know that Thy light grows dim in the
 heart that bears its insult of bondage.
 That the life, when it becomes feeble, timidly
 yields Thy throne to untruth.
 For weakness is the traitor who betrays our soul.
 Let this be our prayer to Thee—
 Give us power to resist pleasure where it enslaves us,
 To lift our sorrow up to Thee as the summer
 holds its midday sun,
 Make us strong that our worship may flower in
 love and bear fruit in work.
 Make us strong that we may not insult the weak and the fallen,
 That we may hold our love high where all things
 around us are wooing the dust.
 They fight and kill for self-love, giving it Thy name,
 They fight for hunger that thrives on brother's flesh,
 They fight against Thine anger and die.
 But let us stand firm and suffer with strength
 for the true, for the Good, for the Eternal in man,
 for Thy Kingdom which is in the union of hearts,
 for Thy Freedom which is of the soul.
 Our voyage is begun, Captain,
 We bow to Thee!
 The storm howls and the waves are wicked and wild,
 but we sail on.
 The menace of danger waits in the way to yield to
 Thee its offering of pain.
 And a voice in the heart of the tempest cries;
 "Come to conquer fear!"
 Let us not linger to look back for the laggards, or
 benumb the darkening hours with dread and doubt.
 For Thy time is our time and Thy burden is our own
 and life and death are but Thy breath
 playing upon the eternal sea of Life.
 Let us not wear our hearts away in picking small
 help and taking slow count of friends.
 Let us know more than all else that Thou art with
 us and we are Thine for ever.

Tagore observed:

Mr. Montagu had before him a task that had rarely fallen to the lot of any statesman; he has, at the same time, a splendid opportunity of doing to India that justice which has been long overdue.

The chairman then commented on the statement in the Montagu announcement that responsible Government would be granted in stages. He doubted how far this idea was politically sound. "The weight of reason and experience, and perhaps of authority, was," he stated, "in favour of full responsible Government in the internal administration of the country."

Surendranath Bannerji then proposed Mrs. Besant to the Chair and paid her a handsome tribute, saying that she had made India her home for the highest ends of the spiritual, moral, intellectual and political salvation of her people. She had suffered for the sake of India and her love had been tested by the truest and noblest of all tests—consecrated by sacrifice and suffering.

Mrs. Besant then delivered a long speech. It had been prepared with great care and disclosed a wide range of study and contained copious extracts from the utterances of British and Indian statesmen, lending support to the Indian claim to Self-Government. She observed that the new civilization was of Righteousness and Justice and therefore of Brotherhood, of Order, of Liberty, of Peace, of Happiness. These cannot be built up until the elements are removed which have brought the old civilization crashing about our ears. Therefore, she added, it is necessary that the war should be fought out to its appointed end and no premature peace should leave its object unattained. Autocracy and bureaucracy must utterly perish in the East and West, and in order that their germs might not resprout in the future, they must be discredited in the minds of men. After tracing the evolution of our political ideas and the important events which led to it, she referred to the new spirit in India and its causes and mentioned, among others, the influence of English education, literature and ideals, the effect of travel in Europe, Japan and the United States of America. Among the special forces at work during the last few years, she mentioned particularly the following:

- (a) loss of belief in the superiority of the White races;
- (b) awakening of women to claim their ancient position;
- (c) awakening of the masses.

In conclusion she feelingly observed:

After a history of a millennium, stretching far back out of the ken of mortal eyes; having lived but not died with the mighty civilisations of the Past; having seen them rise, flourish and decay, until only their sepulchres remain deep buried in the earth's crust; having fought and triumphed and suffered and having survived all changes, unbroken, India, who has been verily the Crucified among Nations, now stands on her Resurrection morning—the Immortal, the Glorious, the Ever Young; and India shall soon be seen, proud and self-reliant, strong and free, the radiant splendour of Asia and the light of blessing of the world.

At this Session 15 resolutions were passed but the two important ones were, 'Welcome to Mr. Montagu' (Resolution 4) and 'Demand for Self-Government' (Resolution 12). The resolution relating to Mr. Montagu was proposed from the Chair. It was very brief and was carried with applause as follows:

This Congress extends to the Rt. Hon'ble E. S. Montagu a most cordial welcome on the occasion of his visit to India. The Congress hopes that his visit will be crowned with success and that it will convince him of the supreme necessity for the establishment of responsible Government in this country.

The 12th resolution demanding Self-Government was as follows:

This Congress expresses its grateful satisfaction over the pronouncement made by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, on behalf of the Imperial Government, that its object is the establishment of Responsible Government in India.

The Congress strongly urges the necessity for the immediate enactment of a Parliamentary Statute providing for the establishment of Responsible Government in India, the full measure to be attained within a time limit to be fixed in the Statute itself at an early date.

The Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms ought to be immediately introduced by Statute as the first step in the process.

A brilliant array of speakers spoke on this resolution. It was moved by Surendranath Bannerji and supported by others, including Jinnah, Bipinchandra Pal, Tilak, Das and lastly by myself. Each speaker contributed his peculiar quota to the elucidation of the resolution

Jinnah seconded the resolution and clarified the idea relating to the Congress-League Scheme. That Scheme, he observed, is only a step towards complete Responsible Government; but while we propose it as such a step, we desire that the attainment of complete Responsible Government should be laid down in the Statute and not left to the will of any party and it is for this purpose that we say that a time limit to be automatically operative should be stated in the Statute itself.

Bipinchandra Pal supported the resolution and many of his observations were indicative of the Bengal school of thought. Pal had proposed to put in an amendment that, after the necessary grateful recognition of the pronouncement of policy made by Mr. Montagu, a demand should be made that an Act should be definitely passed by Parliament and in that Act provision should be made for the progressive realisation of Responsible Government as an integral part of the British Empire.

About the Congress-League Scheme, he said:

That scheme, is an excellent scheme, but I will point out that the circumstances, under which we formulated that scheme, have changed vitally, in many directions, since last year. However, I accept the Congress-League Scheme for the time being and I hope that when Mr. Montagu makes his declaration, you will, with one voice, without one dissentient vote either from Muslims or Hindus, demand complete, unrestricted, full Responsible Government now and at once for the Provinces, and later on, during the reconstruction of the Empire, for the Federal Government at Simla or Delhi.

Tilak lent further support to the resolution. His speech contained many indications of the political philosophy for which he had boldly stood out often against the sentiments of some of his countrymen, viz. "Accept what you get and fight for the rest." He commented on the words, "grateful satisfaction", occurring in the Resolution and said:

I am satisfied for the present because what was unpronounced before has been now declared, and I expect that it will be followed by higher stages of development in time to come. But all talk about further stages, is, in my opinion, out of the question at present. Under present circumstances I shall be quite content, and, so I think will most of you, if the first step that we demand is granted to us immediately.



General Secretaries, The Indian National Congress Special Session 1918
Sitting L to R GULABCHAND D JAVERI, A S ERULKAR M B VELKAR, JAMNADAS DWARAKADAS
MRS BESANT HASAN IMAM (President), HANARAJ P THAKERSY, N V VIBHAKAR, M R
JAYAKAR, C M DESAI
Standing L to R RATANSY D MORARJI, SHERIF DEVJI KANJI, SYED HUSAIN MOWJI GOVINDEJI
SETH, D D SATHAYE, R G MUNSIFT UMAR SOBBHANI, KANJI DWARKADAS S G BANIKIT



Taken in January 1923, on the occasion of the formation of the Swarajya Party at my residence in Gurgaum—the house in the background is mine
Sitting L to R M R JAYAKAR, U RAMA RAO, RANGA SWAMY IYENGAR BHAGWANDAS C R Das
HAKIM AJMAL KHAN, SWAMI SATYA DEV, S SATYAMURTI
Standing L to R MOROPANT ABHYANKAR, M K ACHARYA R N MANDLIK M S ANEV BABA
PARANJPE of BENGAL

Tilak's bold advocacy of his doctrines had very great effect and consequently the later speeches echoed the sentiment he had so courageously put forward.

C. P. Ramaswami Iyer made his contribution to the debate by quoting the instance of America granting Self-Government to the Phillipine Islands. He referred to the immemorable words in which America proclaimed a Republic in those Islands:

We place within your reach the instruments of your redemption and the door of opportunity remains open. The triumph is as great for us as for you.

Further support was given by Das, as a prominent representative of the Bengal School. "There is nothing in the present resolution," he said, "which goes against the ideal of that school." Agreeing with the sentiments of Tilak he observed:

It may be said that the British Parliament will never grant you Self-Government but are we considering that at present. When they make a definite pronouncement as to what they are willing to give us, it will be then time to meet again and formulate a definite scheme as to the way in which that ideal may be given effect to. But the time has not come to discuss about it. Because I am afraid that, in the discussion, the main ideal may get lost. We are all agreed as to the great ideal. Let us gather strength to fight for it with all our might-- and let us not rest content till the whole thing is granted to us.

In my speech I interpreted the words "at an early date" occurring in the Resolution. These words, I said, did not refer to the enactment of the Statute but went with the words "to be attained" and the Resolution ought to read: "full measure to be attained at an early date within the time limit to be fixed in the Statute itself." I then replied to the criticism of our opponents that all this agitation for Self-Government was confined to Lawyers and the English-educated community and that behind them there was no support of the non-lawyers and the common men. I quoted the instance of a non-lawyer, uneducated, old-fashioned intelligent peasant in the Deccan whom I had met a few weeks before this Congress Session. I quoted the questions I put him and the answers he gave, showing that, though unlearned, he was well aware of the nature of our demand. For instance, asked about the war,

its causes and effect, he replied, "We uneducated men believe that this war has been sent by God in order to teach England a good lesson." I asked, "When do you think the war will end?" He replied, "We believe in our village circles that war will not end until injustice is destroyed in India." He went on to say, "You must have observed on passing Railway Stations in Southern India attractive posters displaying a Mahratta Sepoy holding a gun; over the top of that poster are displayed the words, 'Mahratta ki jai'. This awakening, he said, has come too late to the British people. You know that select epithets like 'traitors' and 'cowards' have been often showered upon Mahrattas. It is a great awakening," said this agriculturist, "that the British have now recognised that the man-power of India is absolutely necessary for them. Their appeals will not succeed unless they make it through the natural leaders of the people like Tilak and Malaviya. If they do that, the whole country will be converted into an army which will defeat the Germans." Lastly, he asked me, "Are you going to the next *Mela* (Congress)?" and when I said "Yes", he replied, "Go and tell the people that this is how we understand matters in our village circles."

I was followed by B. P. Wadia who had been interned along with Mrs. Besant. His contribution lay in the suggestion that in considering the Home Rule or Self-Government resolution, the Congress should look at the scheme of the Congress and the Muslim League not only from the point of view of Indians but also from the point of view of the British Imperialists.

Dr. Ansari supported the resolution, speaking in Urdu, and S. R. Bomanji of Bombay did so in English. Then came Mrs. Naidu who placed the case of Home Rule before the audience:

Remember, whatever may be the details of our proposals, whatever may be the facts and factors of practical politics that we contemplate, all depends for its worth, its value, its pre-eminent inspiration on the spirit with which these demands and aspirations are conceived and fulfilled. It is no longer an India of Hindus or an India of Muslims, but it is an India of the united Indian Nation, with its culture of five thousand years of *Vedas*, enriched with the Aryan, Unani, Buddhistic, Hellenic, Roman, Scandinavian and European cultures of the world, which have been wisely absorbed by the Vedic culture of India.

Mrs. Naidu was followed by Malaviya who summarised

most of the points which had been urged earlier. He reviewed the whole situation from the previous history of the agitation, which his knowledge of affairs enabled him to do with great effect.

The resolution was carried with acclamation and thus ended this momentous session of the Congress.

Mrs. Besant, a short time thereafter, stated her impressions of this Session in an article in *New India*. I reproduce a typical passage from it:

The discussion [on the Self-Government Resolution] lasted some five hours with ten speakers among whom was Mr. Bomanji who gave the support of the merchants. Mr. B. P. Wadia made a brilliant speech as did Mr. Jayakar. Lokamanya Tilak was persuasive, Mr. Jinnah argumentative, Mr. Surendranath Bannerji inspiring, Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer logical and convincing, Dr. Ansari straight and strong, Mr. Bipinchandra Pal strenuous. Sarojini Devi ideally poetic, while Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya summed up the whole argument with clarity and eloquence.

ON 22 April 1918, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford published their Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms. They had completed the enquiry which they were directed to undertake in the decision announced in the House of Commons and they laid before His Majesty's Government this Report of the conclusions to which they had come, touching the constitutional changes which were desirable in India. In the conclusion of their Report they stated:

If anything could enhance the sense of responsibility under which our recommendations are made in a matter fraught with consequences so immense, it would be the knowledge that even as we bring our Report to an end, far greater issues will hang in the balance upon the battle-fields of Europe. We cannot close this document more fittingly than with the prayer which we know all India echoes that the principles of justice and freedom may be saved in the world by the splendid endurance and self-sacrifice of His Majesty's and Allied armies.

The Report created a great stir in India and proved a veritable apple of discord. Three schools of thought arose. One school expressed their complete abhorrence of this Report on the ground that it did not go far enough and was an empty sham. Another school, of Moderates, was anxious to accept

it without any criticism or differences. The Congress like the Responsivists held a midway position, viz. criticism of the Report, with the view of making it more acceptable to Indian public opinion. Accordingly, a special session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay on 29, 30, 31 August and 1 September 1918, in a spacious pavilion erected on the Marine Lines Maidan. The Reception Committee of the Congress postponed the session for a day in view of a Conference that was being arranged to bring about a compromise between the two wings of the Congress. No compromise being, however, possible, the special Congress session held its sitting on the day to which it had been adjourned, i.e. 29 August, at 1 p.m.

The session created a great stir in Bombay. It was very well attended, there being no less than 500 lady delegates present. Vithalbhai Patel was Chairman of the Reception Committee and Syed Hasan Imam was the President. Many prominent Congressmen attended, among them may be mentioned the names of Annie Besant, Sarojini Naidu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, B. G. Tilak, C. R. Das, Motilal Ghosh, B. C. Pal, Harkisanlal, Vijayaraghavacharya of Salem, M. A. Jinnah, Harchandrai Bishindas, C. Rajagopalachari, Gokarnath Mishra, Satyamurti, and M. S. Aney. Among the Muslim leaders may be mentioned the Raja of Mahamudabad, Yaqub Hasan, Abbas Tayabji, Abdul Cassum, Fazlul Haq, Wazir Husain and S. A. Brelvi. I participated in this Congress session fully and had the opportunity of being one of the ten speakers on the main resolution relating to the Reform Scheme. The Congress-League Scheme was the main basis of the proposals of Reform but a note justifying and supplementing that scheme had been prepared by Wacha and nine others and submitted to the Secretary of State and the Viceroi while the enquiry into the question of Indian Constitutional Reforms was in progress. The note stated, *inter alia*:

If the goal announced is not to be a mere pious wish but is to be treated as an end attainable within a reasonable time and to be strenuously striven for, the immediate substantial steps to be taken in that direction, at the close of the war, can scarcely fall short of the essential features of the Congress-League Scheme, which contains devolution of powers, this devolution being necessarily accompanied by

a reform of the Legislative and Executive machinery of the Government of India and of the Provincial Government, so as to invest—subject, in all cases, to a reasonably restricted veto of Government—the elected representatives of the people with effective control of the administration *in so far only as domestic matters are concerned*, leaving altogether untouched the present powers of the Government of India in regard to the direction of the Military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties; as also in respect of Military Charges for the defence of the country and Tributes from Indian States, that is to say, confining popular control, under proper safeguards, to matters of internal administration only, leaving unimpaired the authority of the Central Executive Government to hold the country in subjection and to protect it against external aggression.

The note went on to say:

A graceful and dispassionate consideration of the proposals embodied in the Congress-League Scheme will thus show that there is nothing in them to cause alarm to those who are anxious to preserve intact the power of the Government of India to maintain Law and Order within and avert aggression from the borders of India.

It was felt that if in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report there had been an approximation to the Congress-League Scheme, there would have been a greater likelihood of its acceptance by the country and the feeling in the Congress session was that the scheme adumbrated in the "Montford" Report would have to be radically and materially modified before it could be made acceptable to the country. Vithalbhai Patel in his speech submitted the report to a very critical examination. He stated that it had failed to satisfy the country and had proved very disappointing. He regretted the fact that the strength of the session had been impaired by the absence of friends who forgot that in politics, no certain principles having been discovered, the first conditions of success are compromise, barter, expediency and concession. Then he examined the "Montford" scheme briefly, especially with reference to the need for fiscal autonomy and the absence of any recommendation tending to alter the responsibility of the Government of India to Parliament and the complete detachment of that Government from all popular influence and control, tending to make it more centralised and hardened and progressively diminishing its amenability to popular control in future. A

substantial beginning in Responsible Government must, he said, be made in the Government of India at once and a time-limit must be fixed for granting full Responsible Government to India and that limit should not exceed fifteen to twenty years.

The criticism of the Congress speakers, including the President, went on these lines. President Hasan Imam reminded the audience that the special session of the Congress was dealing with matters of exceptional difficulty:

I have not dealt with every detail of the reforms but I have tried to touch upon in brief the more important of the proposals. The subject itself is vast, the atmosphere in which it is to be discussed has to be calm, heat has to be avoided, rhetoric has to give place to sound reasoning.

Addressing his countrymen, he said:

Place your demands forcibly and insistently and if you are not heard now, your cause being righteous, you will prevail in the end.

As to the great British Nation, he commended the warning words addressed to the British people by their great liberal statesman, Lord Morley:

If Imperialism means your own demoralisation, if it means lowering your own standard of Civilisation and Humanity, then, in the name of all you hold precious, beware of it.

A Subjects Committee was then formed and an innovation was introduced in its Constitution. It was announced that the Muslim League had decided, after consulting some of its leaders, that in the Subjects Committee there should be a Conference at which the Council of the Muslim League might also be present. The Muslim League would not thereby be bound to anything that we might decide; but it was to be a friendly conversation in order that the resolutions that we might pass, might be on lines similar to those that commended themselves to the League. A proposal was accordingly submitted to the Subjects Committee to arrange a Conference with the All-India Muslim League Council for the purpose of drafting the resolutions, because it was felt that at this juncture a harmonious set of resolutions would be conducive to Indian interests.

At this session several resolutions were passed but the most important one was Resolution No. 6, on the Reform Scheme, which, as stated above, was a modified version of the Congress-League Scheme. This resolution was as follows:

That this Congress appreciates the earnest attempts on the part of Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State, and His Excellency the Viceroy to inaugurate the system of Responsible Government in India, and while it recognises that some of the proposals constitute an advance in the present conditions in some directions, it is of opinion that the proposals are disappointing and unsatisfactory and suggests the following modifications as absolutely necessary to constitute a substantive step towards Responsible Government.

The modifications suggested were on the lines of the proposals adumbrated in the speeches of Patel and Hasan Imam and they related to the improvement of the Government of India, the Legislative Assembly, the Provincial arrangements, the Legislature, the relation between India Office and Parliament. It is unnecessary to repeat in detail these modifications.

This resolution was moved by Madan Mohan Malaviya and amongst several speakers who spoke on it were Motilal Nehru, B. G. Tilak, B. C. Pal, Mrs. Besant and myself.

Madan Mohan Malaviya in his speech gave expression to the general sense prevailing in the country regarding reforms, while he acknowledged and appreciated the earnestness of the attempt made by Mr. Montagu and the Viceroy in making a beginning of Responsible Government.

Motilal Nehru who was then a prominent Moderate, followed. He made it clear that he stood before the audience as a practical illustration of the applicability of the principle of unity. "We did not demand complete Responsible Government," he admitted, "but whatever fraction of Responsible Government it was to be, we expect it to be a real fraction."

Tilak, who succeeded him in supporting the resolution, recommended the acceptance of the resolution as representing a distilled compromise accepted in the Subjects Committee. He concluded with a warning given to the critics of India to remember that unless India is raised to the status of the Self-governing Colonies, to be an equal Member of the Empire, the Empire will lose in strength and will be in danger.

Bipinchandra Pal, who followed, sounded a note of differ-

ence, but he made it clear that he did not wish to pursue it and accepted the resolution in a spirit of unity. He surprised his audience in the end by expressing the following sentiment:

We want to save the Empire. Allow us to save it; that is all we want. We want to keep up the British connection for guidance sake as is stated in the resolution. For goodness sake make it easy for the older men to induce the younger men to keep up the connection with the Empire.

I spoke after Bipinchandra Pal. In my speech I made a reference to an attack on the Congress which had appeared in *The Times of India* two days before the session, in which that paper had ridiculed the Congress session in an article headed, "Alice's Adventure in the Congress." I said that in making this reference to the wonderful book, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Times of India* lost sight of an important episode in that book, that Alice desired to have some jam, for which she pressed her elders. They had plenty of jam with them. But in response to her wish they assured her, "Plenty of jam yesterday, plenty of jam to-morrow but no jam to-day." In similar terms, the Montagu-Chelmsford report says, "Plenty of Self-Government in the past, plenty in future, but none at present."

The basic conception of the report, I added, is that—

India is a big school, that England and the Government of India are school masters and that India will be put into classes, so that year after year (it may be 5 or 10, 15 or 20) periodical examinations will be conducted and promotion made according to India's fitness, of which, to quote the words of the Montagu announcement "The British people and the Indian Government will be the sole judges."

Then Mrs. Besant rose to conclude the debate on this resolution. Speaking of the different views compromised in this resolution and especially of those Indians who might be said to be lagging behind the Congress and the absolute necessity of taking them along with the Congress, she stated:

I would like to remind you that we are like an army with a strenuous campaign before it, advancing against well-disciplined and serried hosts. For the success of such an army you have various branches, your artillery, your cavalry, your infantry. Their place is different, but they must be co-ordinated if they are to succeed in the struggle. If your cavalry charges ahead brilliantly, galloping on the

foe without the preparation of the artillery, without the support of the infantry, what will happen? The enemy will meet them in their charge, will find them unsupported, will mow them down, separated from the main body of the host, and then, having annihilated the cavalry, he would advance across the grounds left empty to annihilate the infantry in its turn. If we are impatient idealists, if we are the cavalry, we cannot win the battle by ourselves. We must have the infantry with us, who cannot gallop on horses, but who have to walk—for that is their particular work—and I say we must wait for the infantry, we must be ready to accommodate our pace to theirs and when their main body has fought their battle, then we must charge forward as rapidly as we can, and turn the victory into a complete rout of the enemy. Our opponents accuse us of being guilty of diversity of opinions. But that is a good sign, for if you are asleep, if you are paralysed, then you have blank unity everywhere, but if you have diversity you should not quarrel with the manifestation of life. In England they have Radical leagues, Liberal leagues, Conservative leagues, Tory leagues, but they all meet in Parliament. Have your Moderate Associations, have your Home Rule Leagues. Have as many separate organisations as you choose but join the Parliament of the Nation, the Parliament of the People and let its united wisdom guide the deliberations of all.

I ask you to start the beginning of a new life, of a new era for India, to pitch your hopes high, pitch your aspirations high, for it was said "if you aim at the stars, then your arrow will travel far."

The resolution was carried with acclamation. About this time, the Home Rule League Branch at Bombay was very powerful. Owing to the presence of Mrs. Besant a number of political meetings were held to give full support to the resolution passed at the special session of the Congress in Bombay. At one of these public meetings, I moved the following resolution:

That this meeting of the citizens of Bombay declares that the resolution adopted by the Imperial Council on the Motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Bannerji does not represent the view of the country in that the Reform proposals of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy do not, as they stand, constitute a definite advance towards the progressive realization of responsible Government in India, seeing that they do not fulfil the terms of reference of the Declaration of August 20, but maintain the autocracy of the supreme Government and thus take no step towards responsible Government, and it, therefore, calls upon a Committee of non-official members appointed by the Imperial Council to adopt the modifications demanded by the Indian National Congress

and All-India Muslim League which alone can make the Scheme acceptable to the country. The meeting unreservedly approves of and endorses the resolution passed by the Special Session of the Indian National Congress.

Mrs. Besant in her speech at the Special Session in Bombay had expressed in very strong terms, as stated above, the necessity of sending deputations to England to agitate for the adoption of the Congress and Muslim League Scheme and to have necessary modifications introduced in the Montford report. Accordingly, as stated above, three deputations were thought of: (1) Congress, (2) Besant Home Rule League, and (3) Tilak Home Rule League. The two branches of the Home Rule League worked hand in hand, contenting themselves with carrying on identical agitation at different centres in Western India. Since 1917, Tilak had been making every effort to get together a representative deputation to go with him to England and in my diary of 16 January 1917 I find the following note:

Tilak in my chamber in the High Court. Came to discuss my going with him to England to agitate the Indian cause. He said he was trying to induce Jinnah also to join.

This visit of Tilak left a deep impression on my mind of his characteristic quality of winning over young men by gracious kindness to which, in previous pages, I have made a reference. The circumstances of his visit will prove interesting even at this date. One evening, I returned to my chamber in the High Court at half-past seven after finishing the work of the day. I then found that Tilak had been waiting in my chamber for nearly three hours. When I taxed my office boy for his failure to inform me of the visit of this great leader, he apologised and said, "I did not know that it was the Lokmanya; from his dress I took him to be one of your upcountry clients, come to offer you a brief." When Tilak heard this he replied, "Why do you blame your servant? I am really an upcountry client come to offer you a brief to accompany me to England to plead our cause." These words were said with such grace and humour that I agreed to consider his request.

Eventually, however, neither Jinnah nor I found it possible, owing to difficulties, to join any of the three Deputations

mentioned above. I had realized like Jinnah that the work in England, away from the active pressure of Indian opinion, would be difficult, unless the selection of the delegates had been so judiciously made that they would feel completely friendly and loyal to one another and work as a team in the hostile atmosphere of a foreign country where the temptations to differ would be abundant.

The Besant Home Rule League found it difficult to join the Congress Deputation for reasons which Mrs. Besant explained to me in her letter of 24 January 1919, as follows:

Many of us cannot go on the Congress Deputation because of the rigid limitation imposed on the Delegates and the exclusion of all negotiations on the draft Bill.

The Deputation which she had proposed in that letter consisted of leaders I have mentioned on a previous page. It was an ideal group and if this Deputation had been arranged, a separate Deputation on behalf of the Congress would have been unnecessary, because the members who later formed the Congress Deputation, excepting one or two, were included in Mrs. Besant's Deputation. But unfortunately, as often happens with us, no agreement could be brought about between these two proposed Deputations relating to the work which they were to do together in England and consequently the plan did not materialise.

For the same reason fell through another reasonable proposal made by Chandavarkar and Setalvad in the following telegram, which I received early in February 1918:

We earnestly suggest All India Congress Committee to secure one All India joint deputation to England including, if possible, Muslim League also, instead of separate deputations from different Organisations going different times. Situation and prospects of Reform demand united action both in form and substance. In any event, one such joint deputation of all Congress and Home Rule Organisations, composed of persons of experience and standing as well as energetic young workers is sure to be effective at this momentous juncture. Hope our respectful suggestion commends itself.

This telegram was also sent to the All India Congress Committee but apparently it had no effect.

But though I was unable to join any of these Deputations,

I gave my full help in obtaining support for them in the City of Bombay, and in arranging representative gatherings to wish them Godspeed. The first such meeting of a most representative character was held under the auspices of the Besant Home Rule League on 26 March 1918. On another occasion a large gathering was held at China Baug of Ratansey Morarji, when the President and members of the Bombay Citizen's Reception Committee were At Home to meet Tilak and his Home Rule League deputation proceeding to England a week later. With my special ties with Tilak and his Home Rule League, I took a prominent part in the arrangements of this At Home.

On 4 August 1919, a similar send-off was given to the Congress Deputation. This was at a large public meeting held under the joint auspices of the Provincial Congress Committee, the All India and Indian Home Rule Leagues and the National Union. The Deputation consisted of Hasan Imam, the President of the Congress Session in Bombay, Bipinchandra Pal, and Rangaswami Iyengar who had proceeded on his journey the day before the meeting. I presided at the function and the hall was crowded to its fullest capacity. A number of ladies were present. In my short speech, I welcomed the distinguished guests and pointed out the meritorious services rendered to India severally by them.

Bipinchandra Pal spoke after me in a tone which showed that the Deputation was not optimistic about the results of their efforts in England. But despite this fact, he said, a continuous stream of workers must go to England in order that the British intellect might be able to see the actualities of the situation here. The hopes of India lay in an appeal to world culture, world conscience and world civilization and if they could speak in the name and with the will of the Mother of Civilizations to modern civilization exemplified in England, he did not think it would be easy for that civilization to turn a deaf ear to the cry of India.

Hasan Imam followed in a brief, witty speech which was a revelation to those who had not known him from near. He explained the significance of the Congress resolution passed a short time ago and added:

At one time I used to look upon political matters as a field for speculation, and for dialectics. However, as time went on and experience

matured, I came to realize that it was not by indulging in enthusiastic expressions or by wording their demands in violent language that we could succeed in getting that which would be attained only by sober thought.

On 16 April 1918, a communication was, however, received from the Secretary of State for India intimating the decision of His Majesty's Government that passports would be refused to Home Rule and Congress delegates wishing to proceed to England. The War Cabinet in London explained that the question of passports came again before the Cabinet that day:

The Cabinet have re-affirmed their decision that in the existing circumstances none of the Home Rule delegates can be allowed to proceed to this country. His Majesty's Government consider that the journey on which these persons have embarked was uncalled for and the purpose of it was lacking in any sufficient justification.

They added:

Mr. Montagu's conclusions, arrived at after ascertaining the views of every section of the Indian community, for which purpose he had gone to India, were still unknown and had not yet been communicated to His Majesty's Government. To come to England under these circumstances in the avowed role of agitators, to start an uncompromising propaganda in favour of Home Rule of their own, such a procedure at any time would be improper but, under existing circumstances, when a country is waging a great war and is confronted with a crisis of the greatest magnitude which calls for supreme concentration of national effort and, so far as is possible, the suspension of purely political agitation and platform controversy in whatever interest, it is one in which the Government could not acquiesce. Further, the generous intentions of His Majesty's Government which have already been demonstrated by the pronouncement of the Secretary of State in Parliament and his visit to India, would be seriously compromised, and might be fatally impaired if an attempt were made before or at the moment when they were considering his report, to force their hands by a premature and possibly harmful propaganda. It is with great regret that His Majesty's Government are compelled to give this decision. But they have no alternative.

Although Mrs. Besant was not able to lead a deputation to England, she succeeded in leading a Deputation of her Home Rule League to wait upon Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford. I was a member of that Deputation and can recall the interesting talks we had. The Press report published

on 25 December 1917, stated:

The Viceroy and Mr. Montagu started receiving Deputations at the Government House. The procedure adopted was to conduct the Deputations into the Durbar Hall where they were presented to the Viceroy and Mr. Montagu by the Military Secretary to the Viceroy, assisted by the Oriental Translator to the Bombay Government.

In all, ten deputations were received, commencing with the deputation consisting of the non-official members of the Bombay Legislative Council which was led by Gokuldas Parekh. Some of the other deputations were communal, e.g. of the Anjuman-i-Islam, Indian Christians and Lingayats. The representations of these communal bodies were mostly in conflict with the demands of the Home Rule League and the Congress. I can quote as instances the Depressed Classes Deputation, and a combined Deputation of the Deccan Ryots Association, Poona, the Kamgar Hitavardhak Sabha, Bombay, and the Marathi-speaking Hindu backward classes. The principal members of the last were B. V. Jadhav, V. R. Kothari and R. G. Shinde. An address was read on their behalf in which the principal thought was the unfitness of India for democratic life. At the outset, this Deputation thought it to be its duty to give a warning that the application of western political canons to this country without necessary modifications was likely to be productive of grave injury to the interests of the masses, the bulk of whom was made up of various castes separated from one another and from the "classes" by absolutely impassable barriers of custom and tradition. These castes, moreover, it was stated, were to an enormous degree untouched by western influences which supplied the only democratic ideals in this country.

They further pointed out that the unfitness of Indian society for democratic life based purely on the western model had in fact increased by the fact that the educational status of only a few castes had been raised to a high degree and that all the others had been allowed to remain as low as ever. The gulf which always separated the higher castes from the masses of the country on religious and social grounds had only been widened by the enormous educational progress of a few and the appalling ignorance of the many. In consequence of this, advanced castes had been wieldin^g all the influence

attached to the Local and Municipal Boards and the Legislative Councils. The masses exercised practically no influence in these bodies. Their representation ended by uttering a warning that this state of things would be aggravated if the governing institutions of the country were more and more brought under popular control, without adequate provision being made for the effective representation of the castes which constituted the masses of the country. The institution of castes, they pointed out, embraced every branch of life and that scarcely any institution was free from caste prejudice which existed even in the Councils and similar other Bodies.

As for the Home Rule League Deputation led by Mrs. Besant, it was the last to attend upon the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. It was composed of all prominent Home Rule Leaguers of both the branches including Jinnah, Bahadurji, Tilak and members of his group, Brelvi, Karandikar, Paranjape, Kelkar and myself. It was a noticeable feature that they all spoke with one voice and in the address which they presented, it was stated:

Our two Leagues with their affiliated branches represent a membership of about fifty thousand, though they have been in existence only for two years past and our experience during this time assures us, beyond doubt, that the principles for which the Home Rule Leagues stand and the Scheme which they have come here to press for acceptance command the support not merely of the so-called educated minority, but of the vast bulk of the people of the Presidency.

They referred to their mass meetings all over the Presidency in which it was not unusual to see twenty to thirty thousand people gathered from time to time and they warned the distinguished visitors not to suppose that there was not, even among the humblest classes in the country, an intelligent understanding of the issues which were about to be decided. They proceeded to urge the merits of the Congress-League Scheme, especially the central and provincial arrangements, and added that they had endeavoured, while adhering to the principles and framework of that Scheme, to lay down for its fulfilment conditions which would ensure its success. Later in the day, interviews were granted to a few members of Mrs. Besant's Home Rule League.

It is interesting to note the effect of these Deputations upon Mr. Montagu, so far as it has been recorded in his Indian

Diary of 26 November:

We are face to face now with the real giants of the political world. We had a collection of first-class politicians of the various Provinces.

Then the names of some of them are mentioned. The Diary then proceeds to observe:

But the difficulty is that owing, as I have often said, to the thinness with which we have spread education, they have run generations away from the rest of India. Whatever might be done in theory, in practice this would be only another indigenous autocracy.

Mrs. Besant and the great Tilak came with their Home Rule League, and read us a more extreme and a bitter address, but one which was undoubtedly interesting and good. Of course the Home Rule League's demands are the same as the Congress's, the Home Rule League really having been started to do the propaganda for the rather old-fashioned Congress. . . . Mrs. Besant, in her white and gold embroidered Indian clothes, with her short, white hair, and the most beautiful voice I have ever heard, was very impressive, and read magnificently. Again a casket was presented, this time quite an attractive object, an elephant tusk.

The Montagu Diary proceeds to observe:

And then at six, we saw Mrs. Besant herself. This was an interesting interview, if ever I had one. She gave me the history of the Home Rule League, how she felt it necessary to get hold of the young boys; how, if the Home Rule League policy could be carried out, she was certain that they would forswear anarchy and come on to the side of the constitutional movement. She assured us solemnly that India would have, and insisted upon having, the power of the purse and the control of the Executive. She fought shy of all the financial problems. She said she was not a financial expert. She got over difficulties in that way. She kept her silvery, quiet voice, and really impressed me enormously. . . . She explained to me that the fact that I had not received a welcome from the Indian people was simply due to their recognition that the Government would not allow it. She implored us to come to the Congress. . . . But the Government of India have carefully arranged our plans, so that we shall be in Bombay when the Congress, the real Indian political movement, is in Calcutta, and now they plead the plans as an excuse for not accepting the invitation which is showered on us.

Our group of workers was concerned in great activities

about this time. On 19 February 1918, we had a very largely attended meeting at the Servants of India Society's quarters to celebrate the Third Death Anniversary of Gokhale. Unfortunately, H. A. Wadia, a life-long friend of Gokhale, who had undertaken to give a talk about Gokhale on the occasion, could not attend and so Samarth presided. Many liberal leaders attended and a large gathering of Parsees, Hindus and Mussalmans had assembled. The occasion was one for showing the people that although some of us had now espoused reformed political views different from Gokhale's, it was still possible to come together on the same platform. Really, these differences had been magnified. I explained the special political characteristics of Gokhale as intense straightforwardness, delicate sentiment and a sweet commingling of eastern and western thought. His own behaviour was always full of self-respect, coupled with high patriotism and tolerance and the incident which would ever be remembered was when Gokhale gave a straight reply to Curzon's attack on Asiatics. Being fully aware of the difficulties in our way, he endeavoured sympathetically to reconcile the demands of the people and the opposition of the Government.

In 1907 Gokhale, I said, had framed the demands of India as they were then conceived. "We are now in an age of Home Rule in 1918," I said, "and if he had been alive to-day, we can conjecture how he would have acted." He would have stated in the boldest terms the demands of India, to be achieved only by intensive agitation both in India and England. He defined what he called constitutional agitation as concerned with the object of bringing the pressure of public opinion to bear upon the actions of Government and included all steps from petitions and requests to a no-tax campaign, though he was averse to the adoption of the latter method except on very rare occasions and subject to strict limitations. He impressed upon India the necessity of contacting British Democracy and held the view that Swaraj could not be secured merely by making demands and was not worth having if it could be secured only by such methods. He worked with tireless zeal to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity and often said that he was like a stone buried underground, unknown and unremembered, so that a superstructure worthy of India might rise upon his forgotten existence.

A few days later, on receiving the sad news of his death,

we paid an eloquent tribute to Sir William Wedderburn for his strenuous, selfless and fearless work for India. A public meeting under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association was held on 20 March 1918 to express regret at his death. Chandavarkar presided and there was a large gathering, including persons who rarely attended political meetings.

Chandavarkar's speech was reminiscent of Wedderburn's connection with the Congress. He called him a warm friend of the rayat, of social reform and particularly of female education, a consistent supporter of the rights and interests of Indian Ruling Princes and Chiefs and their States. He was the man behind Miss Florence Nightingale when she pressed the necessity of village sanitation in India on the attention of successive Secretaries of State and Viceroy. He served the cause of Self-Government within the Empire, and was a promoter of Hindu-Muslim unity. "What formed the background of this service?" Chandavarkar asked. It was his intense love for India. He belonged to that class of workers who delighted in rousing in the people a consciousness of their worth, inspired them with self-confidence and heartened them to learn even from their failures how to stand on their own legs.

Chandavarkar concluded with the observation that Wedderburn often expressed his view that all Reform moved along the lines of least resistance and that political reform in its turn accelerated social reform. He was often called a dreamer and a seer, but his dreams were neither of political indigestion nor of political underfeeding; they were the dreams of health—sane, sober and steady. He was free from a hectic temper and hectoring spirit which he thought only set back in the end, while it seemed to hasten, the clock of enduring progress.

Hormusjee Wadia then moved the following resolution:

That a suitable Memorial be erected to the late Sir William Wedderburn and a Committee is hereby appointed to invite subscriptions and take all necessary steps in that behalf.

The Committee was very representative, including the old Liberal and Home Rule politicians of whom I was one. I seconded the resolution. In my speech I referred to Wedderburn's varied activities which indicated that the right type

of British official in India had a distinct and an important part to play even in the field of Indian aspirations. He proved that while working for the good of the Indian people, the Civil Servants in this country could as well be loyal to the Government who paid them. I ended by referring to the closing words of his presidential address at the Congress: "I have eaten the salt of India and I shall be true to it till the end of my life."

ON 24 April 1918, a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held, under the auspices of the Home Rule League, to hear a statement from Gandhi in regard to the then situation at Kaira in Gujerat and the Passive Resistance Movement inaugurated there to express sympathy with Resisters who had suffered. The meeting condemned the attitude of Mr. Pratt, the then Commissioner of Gujerat. Vithalbhai Patel presided. The proceedings were mostly in Marathi and Gujerati. Patel stated that owing to the excess of rain the previous October, the crops in the Kaira District had failed. So, in November, the Kaira rayats sent in two hundred petitions for suspension of revenue signed by 20,000 persons. These petitions were returned to the petitioners by the Government because they had not been sent through proper channels. The rayats then sent their petitions through the Collector, but nothing came of this, with the result that the agriculturists ultimately resolved to suffer privations and resort to passive resistance when they found that, notwithstanding their petitions, the Collector had begun to collect the revenue. Thereupon public leaders paid visits to the Kaira District and their inquiries showed that the crops were, at the most, four annas in the rupee. They contacted the Collector and he assured them that he would enquire into the matter, but the collection of revenue continued. In the inquiry made by a public body called the Gujerat Sabha, it was found that the crops had really failed. The Sabha, therefore, advised the rayat to postpone the payment of the revenue pending the reply of the authorities. Thereupon the Government issued an angry Press Note which declared, among other things, that the advice of the Gujerat Sabha was ill-judged and mischievous. Partial suspensions of revenue were, however, made which were not found to be sufficient. Goculdas

Parekh had gone to institute the inquiry personally and eventually a deputation consisting of Gandhi, Dinshaw Wacha, Parekh and Patel waited on the Governor. Nothing, however, came of the interview, excepting a disappointing reply. Another inquiry disclosed that the crops were less than four annas, which the Government denied. There was in consequence no alternative to starting passive resistance.

On these facts Gandhi addressed the public meeting in Bombay. This was one of his rare utterances before a Bombay audience at that time. He began by assuring the Government that the struggle started in the Kaira District was not due to any outside agitation but was the result of the people of the district feeling disappointed. The Home Rulers had nothing to do with the agitation. He reminded the audience that he himself had never taken in his life any part in any movement calculated to embarrass the Government and that he would never do so, but the movement in the Kaira District was of a different character. When he received these complaints, he undertook to make inquiries to find out the real truth. The inquiries were conducted by Parekh and Patel through the Gujerat Sabha which could not be regarded as anything but a sober Association. The inquiries showed that there was real distress in the Kaira District and the crop was less than four annas. Every effort had been made to make the officials realize the gravity of the situation. He himself saw a number of officials in the matter but all his attempts proved of no avail and it was then found that there was no other course left open but *Satyagraha*. Proceeding, Gandhi repudiated the view that the Kaira agriculturists were in a prosperous condition. There was very little cash or grain in their stores. The rich people of Bombay would have easily paid the money the Government demanded from the agriculturists, but Gandhi thought that that would have been no real remedy. The agriculturists knew that while such a step would relieve the situation temporarily, it would not prevent the recurrence of such a situation in future. So the agriculturists resolved to undergo hardships and sacrifices, so that they might not have to bear them in future. Mr. Pratt, the Commissioner, had expressed the view that if the request of the agriculturists in the Kaira District were granted, people in other parts of the country would make a similar demand for suspension or remission of revenue but such a view,

Gandhi said, was in conflict with the facts as they had existed. The sufferings of the poor, on this occasion, would be for ever the golden key. In practising Satyagraha Gandhi assured the audience that there was no intention to embarrass the Government. All that they desired was to rouse the sense of justice and fairness on the part of Government.

Tilak then moved the following resolution:

That this public meeting of the citizens of Bombay, having heard the statement of Mr. M. K. Gandhi regarding the agricultural situation in the Kaira District, desires to offer its sympathy and support to the Kaira cultivators against unreason and injustice on the part of the local authority and urges the Government either to grant the request of the people for suspension of the collection of the revenue assessment for one year or to grant an impartial inquiry to investigate the question of the extent of the failure of the crops.

In moving this resolution Tilak observed that the question was not one concerning the farmers in the Kaira District alone. Some years previously, in 1896, a similar situation had arisen in the Kolaba District and they had there at that time Mr. Pratt and another official to deal with the situation, with the result that the peasants were prosecuted and many of them evicted. There were many cases where, on such eviction, the farmers were found begging in the streets. The official attitude was contrary to the opinion of the Famine Commission which had said that revenue should be suspended in a lean year, but Mr. Pratt's contention was that he alone had the right to determine whether there was a good crop or not and whether the rayat should be given a remission or not. The people on the other side contended that there should be an independent Commission to determine the facts of the difficult situation. This simple question, Tilak said, had now become a very complex one on account of the attitude of Mr. Pratt. Impartial judges were of the opinion that the crops were not more than four annas in the rupee. We must not allow the rayat to be defeated in this fair fight and he requested the people to support the resolution which he had moved.

Strong speeches followed condemning the attitude adopted by Mr. Pratt in his speech at Nadiad on the 12th instant and the threat he had used therein of perpetual exclusion against those who had refused to pay the revenue and their heirs.

The meeting urged upon the Government the necessity of calling upon Mr. Pratt to withdraw the same.

I was one of the speakers on the condemnation of what I called was the *Ma-Bap* attitude of Mr. Pratt, who regarded himself not merely as a Government official, but as the Government itself.

The Kaira Satyagraha mentioned above had far-reaching consequences, and eventually pleaders taking part in it were proceeded against on the notices of the Chief Justice and Judges of the High Court of Bombay, issued on 12 July 1919, calling on the pleaders to show cause why they should not be dealt with under the disciplinary jurisdiction of the High Court for having signed the Satyagraha pledge. Most of the leading men at the Bar were engaged for one or the other of the offending pleaders. Setalvad led the group of Counsel of which I was one. The hearing took place before a special bench composed of Macleod, Chief Justice, and Judges Heaton and Kajiji. The circumstances which led to these proceedings were that, in consequence of the Government of India having passed the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bills Nos. 1 and 11 of 1919 (the Rowlatt Acts) against the united opinion of the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council and the solid opinion of the Indian public, Gandhi started a Satyagraha movement and invited members of the public, who could afford to do so, to sign the Satyagraha pledge, he himself being the first to sign it. The six lawyers charged in these proceedings were from Ahmedabad and had signed this pledge which ran as follows:

Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill (Bill No. 1 of 1919), and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill (Bill No. 11 of 1919) are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and of the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that, in the event of these Bills becoming Law or until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as the Committee, to be hereafter appointed, may think fit and we further affirm that, in the struggle, we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property.

It will thus be seen that out of circumstances which had been in the meanwhile simmering in Western India, these

High Court proceedings arose and were regarded in a sense as a test of their legality. As such the occasion was welcomed by public opinion. This accounts for the large array of lawyers at the High Court including Setalvad, who, it was well known, was not a follower of Gandhi's doctrines but thought it was his duty as a lawyer to support freedom of opinion on matters of great public feeling.

The proceedings began on a reference made by B. C. Kennedy, the District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar of the High Court. He had an interview, he added, with the pleaders concerned but was not satisfied with the explanation they had furnished of their conduct. He, therefore, submitted the case for the orders of the High Court, thinking that the question was of general importance. He added that he was of the opinion that the lawyers concerned were sincerely and conscientiously under the impression that the legislation was a crime and that he would not blame them for going to the edge of the law to oppose the legislation. They are all men, he added, for whom he had considerable esteem. He had known them and appreciated them for some years and it was painful for him to raise the case but he was of the opinion that they were unfit to practise until they had severed their connection with this movement in the same public way in which they had joined it. He sent a copy of their explanation to the High Court and concluded that no one would be more pleased than himself if it could be found that their explanation was satisfactory. He personally was of opinion that it was not.

On this report of the District Judge coming up for consideration before the High Court on 26 June 1919, the Judges decided to issue a notice against the offending lawyers stating that, by subscribing to the said pledge and thereby undertaking civilly to disobey certain Acts of the Legislature, they had rendered themselves liable under the provisions of the law to be removed or suspended from practice. They were, therefore, called upon to show cause why this should not be done.

After mentioning the relevant circumstances of the case, Setalvad contended that it was clear that the pleaders were not at all connected with the disturbances which had taken place. On the contrary, it appeared that they had tried their best to quell them. In the course of the argument at the Bar

all aspects of the legal consequences of the Satyagraha pledge were discussed. I followed Setalvad on behalf of two pleaders. Supporting Setalvad I added that the conduct of the pleaders in signing the pledge only and taking no part in the subsequent disturbances was not such a consequence as would necessitate action under disciplinary jurisdiction. My clients, I added, were acting according to their political convictions and never attempted to foist their opinions upon other people. The Chief Justice put me a pointed question whether a person who is prepared to disobey the laws which an outsider Committee might name, should be granted a Sanad to practise. My reply was that the disobedience was not general. It was only to be operative until the Rowlatt Acts were repealed. Under these circumstances, the disobedience being limited to one occasion on which the entire public opinion was united in opposition, there should be no objection to issue a Sanad to the person concerned.

The Advocate-General opposed and his main argument was that the pleaders, being officers of the Court helping the administration of justice, their plain duty was not to break the laws but to support at all times the majesty of the laws, good or otherwise, once they were promulgated. One of the judges asked him the question: "Do you say that this support of the laws must be at all times? Even the judges would not say that." To that, the Advocate-General's reply was that if such things were allowed there would be encouragement to such conduct on the part of lawyers. He controverted the argument which I had advanced that the pledge was limited to certain occasions and argued, with reference to an English ruling cited for the defence, that the conditions prevailing in England as shown in the ruling itself were different and any reference to the latitude allowed to lawyers for their utterances in England would be irrelevant here in India. Setalvad replied that it was wrong to apply two different standards to the fraternity of lawyers—one applicable to lawyers in England and the other to those in India. It would be unfair to lay down the standard of independence of the Bar in this country differently from the one acknowledged in England. In regard to upholding the majesty of law, it would be carrying matters too far to suggest that lawyers must not attack bad laws but must always support laws once they have been passed. On that the Chief Justice remarked

that he did not think that there were any *Sabhas* or pledges of this kind in England, to which Counsel replied there were several in England with worse pledges. The Court took time to consider and the result was as expected.

On the same day a Manifesto signed by prominent leaders of the Congress and Home Rule League was issued containing an appeal to Britain to redeem the pledge of freedom. The prominent sentiment in the Manifesto was that Great Britain and India had been brought together and lived side by side for 160 years. The union had brought both gain and loss to both—gain to India by being brought into contact with a liberty-loving and progressive Western nation, gain to England by an immense increase in wealth and impetus to commerce; loss to India by the destruction of her power of initiative and self-defence caused by her becoming a dependency instead of remaining a war-like, wealthy and independent State; loss to England by the clouding of her principles in the adoption of autocracy and the consequent lowering of her status in the world's eyes. The Manifesto further stated that the old martial spirit of India was not dead, as shown by her soldiers in the present war, and even now it was not too late to change. The Manifesto said:

We cannot ask young men to fight for principles, the application of which is denied to their own country. A subject race cannot fight for others with the heart and energy with which a free race can fight for the freedom of itself and others. Let India feel that she is fighting for her freedom as well as for the freedom of others, that she will have her place as a free Nation in the Commonwealth of free Nations under the British Crown and then she will strain every nerve to stand by England till the last.

The Manifesto ended by asking that—

India's leaders be taken into confidence now and treated as recognised sharers in the perils and triumphs of the struggle. If Britain welcomes us as a Nation whose freedom depends upon the issue of the struggle, the signatories of the Manifesto feel sure that they will win. Only the hope of freedom can arouse popular enthusiasm to fighting point. Let us fight under the banner of liberty, for nothing less than that will nerve our men to fight and our women to sacrifice.

This Manifesto was issued prior to the receipt, as stated

above, of the unfortunate message from the War Cabinet in England, the tone and the contents of which, intending to stop political discussion in connection with the war, induced some of the signatories to the Manifesto to stand entirely aside from any co-operation with Government. Thus ended the effectiveness of the Manifesto.

The tension in the situation continued for several months. In the meanwhile the Punjab tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh of April 1919, described in the succeeding chapters, had become known in Bombay and on 3 August a Committee was appointed to collect subscriptions for the relief of sufferers in the Punjab, for prosecuting appeals to the Privy Council which had been submitted against convictions in the Punjab and for taking such other steps as might be necessary in connection with the Punjab situation. The Committee succeeded in collecting a good amount which was utilised for the relief of suffering as stated in the succeeding chapter.

In the meanwhile, a scheme evolved by Mr. Montagu in combination with Lord Chelmsford, later called the Montford scheme had been before the public. But we heard of hostile attempts of the Government and its officials to whittle down even the cautious provisions of that scheme.

So, as Vice-President of the Home Rule League, I wrote, on 17 June 1919, to the Press as follows:

The Home Rule Leaguers continued to be active to obtain support for the Montagu scheme against the hostile attempts of the Government of India, proposing modifications in that scheme in an official despatch to the Secretary of State. So on the 16th of June 1919, as the Vice-President of the Home Rule League, I sent a protest to the Secretary of State for India and the Prime Minister of England, in which I said, "The Council of the Home Rule League strongly disapproves of the modifications of the Montagu Scheme proposed in the Government of India's despatch and considers them retrogressive and believes that they will, if accepted, destroy the elements of responsibility, reduce the importance and usefulness of the Ministers and arm the Governors with wide and arbitrary powers foreign to Responsible Government. The Governor's proposed powers to withdraw subjects from popular control is highly reactionary and prejudicial to harmonious working between the two branches of Government. The proposal regarding budget procedure is retrograde. The Council of the Home Rule League regretfully observes that the proposals are meant to deprive even the Montagu scheme of its satisfactory features and to keep the Provincial Governments under bureaucratic control."

Several incidents happened about this time which raised anti-British feeling to a pitch I had not witnessed before. News of the incidents then happening in the Punjab had reached Bombay (see the succeeding chapters for fuller details), and on behalf of the Council of the Home Rule League I sent protests against the unnecessary rigour and terrorism with which Martial Law had been enforced in the Punjab and against the extraordinary methods adopted to prevent publicity of information and to deprive the alleged culprits of their right of defence by lawyers. Protest was also lodged against the extreme severity of the sentences inflicted by Martial Law tribunals. These acts of the Government had embittered public feeling. We, therefore, suggested that in order to restore confidence, an independent Commission should be appointed to enquire into the circumstances leading to the Punjab outburst and also to investigate into the justifiability of promulgating Martial Law and the other measures adopted in the course of its administration, and that pending such inquiry enforcement of the sentences should be suspended.

On the top of these incidents came the swift and forcible deportation of Horniman, the Honorary Vice-President of the Home Rule League under circumstances described below.

While the agitation against the Rowlatt legislation and Punjab incidents had spread to Bombay and other parts of Western India, and riots and other outbursts of popular resentment were occurring in several places, on an eventful day, 26 April 1919, Benjamin Guy Horniman, the editor of the *Bombay Chronicle* was suddenly arrested, removed to a steamship in the harbour and summarily deported to England. This incident caused a great commotion in Bombay as Horniman had grown very popular for his courageous support and advocacy of Indian freedom and for the independence of his editorship of the *Bombay Chronicle*. Horniman had come out to India some time earlier and was the assistant editor of a Calcutta daily, *The Statesman*. Subsequently, Pherozeshah Mehta, the founder of the *Bombay Chronicle*, brought him to Bombay and made him the Editor of that paper. During Pherozeshah's time, things went on smoothly, but after his death, trouble arose between Horniman and the Directors of the *Chronicle* but it had very little to do with his sudden deportation. Horniman's conduct of the

Chronicle and its independence had secured the approbation even of his critics. After his deportation, Bombay remained ignorant of the true reasons of his sudden and arbitrary deportation until, on 22 May 1919, Mr. Montagu (Secretary of State for India), speaking in the House of Commons on the Indian Budget, referred to Horniman's deportation in the following words:

We have been very patient with Mr. Horniman. In no case has there been a better example of our reluctance to interfere with mere eccentricities of political belief. But when this gentleman began to use his paper, in the middle of riots resulting in loss of life, to spread and to fan the flame, and opened his columns to an accusation that British troops had been using soft-nosed bullets in the streets of Delhi, and when his paper was being distributed free to British troops in Bombay in the hope of exciting disaffection and insubordination, why then, I say that it was high time he left India.

Col. Wedgwood interrupted: "Why not prosecute him?" Mr. Montagu replied:

In normal times he would have been tried and there was a strong case to put before the Law Courts. Riots were occurring and prompt and swift action for the restoration of order was necessary. He was an Englishman. This is one of those cases in which I should hope nobody would ever suggest any racial discrimination. An Indian would have been deported. An Englishman, upon whom far greater responsibility certainly rests, cannot be tolerated in India if he is responsible for the occurrences which we associate with Mr. Horniman.

To these charges, Horniman rendered an explanation published in the *Manchester Guardian* of England on 11 July 1919:

Since my arrival in England, my attention has been drawn to the statement made about me in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State on 22nd May 1919. I was still invalid when I landed. I have since had to rest under Doctor's orders and I have, therefore, not been able to reply to Mr. Montagu earlier.

I do not know how I can be expected to deal with Mr. Montagu's vague charge of "eccentricities of political belief" which he suggests had exhausted the patience of Governments in India, and unless he will be good enough to indicate what these eccentricities are, I hardly think I am called upon to reply to such an amazing statement put forward as a part of justification for so exceptional an act of violence -- an

instant deportation without trial. When, however, Mr. Montagu makes specific charges, I am prepared to deal with him.

As regards the accusation about soft-nosed bullets, Horniman replied:

Except in so far as a telegram appeared in the *Bombay Chronicle* from a responsible correspondent stating "that bullets of a certain type had been picked up in the streets of Delhi", will you allow me to state that there is no truth in any of the statements published in the Press? Though the Government was strongly criticised as it deserved, and the strongest protest was made in my paper regarding the public flogging of people in the streets, the dropping of bombs on unarmcd crowds, and the machine-gunning of demonstrators without adequate provocation, the whole of my personal influence and that of my paper—neither of which is inconsiderable—were used in support of the restoration of order and the inculcation of the doctrine and practice of Satyagraha—the very negation of violence—both before and during the disturbances that occurred. If, as Mr. Montagu says, "there was a strong case to put before the Law Courts," I cannot understand why this should not have been done and why, in fairness, it should not be done now. My rest and confinement, pending the trial, would have put an end to any activities which Government in its wisdom regarded as undesirable and dangerous, and my conviction, if it had followed, would have been more calculated, I imagine, to check public sympathy and agitation on my behalf than an act of violence which has had, in fact, as Mr. Montagu is, no doubt, by this time aware, the reverse effect. I have already said that all my influence and that of my paper was exercised against violence and disorder. In Bombay City, where that influence was chiefly felt, there was no violence, no disorder except some stone-throwing on one day. In contrast to this, in the Punjab, where I doubt whether the *Bombay Chronicle* was available at all at the time, except to a very few persons, the flame of disorder spread and grew with the results now well known. To allege in the face of this, that I was using my influence to spread and fan the flame of disorder is extraordinary. I may add that, while the provocative acts and policy of the Governments of India and of Sir Michael O'Dwyer were severely criticised and condemned in the columns of this paper, the statesmanlike action of Sir George Lloyd [Governor of Bombay] and the tact and restraint of the Magistracy and the Police in Bombay which produced such very different results was fully recognized and generously praised in the *Bombay Chronicle*. I have dealt with one specific charge made by Mr. Montagu. The other is that my paper "was being distributed free to British troops in Bombay in the hope of exciting disaffection and insubordination." The charge of making accusations against the British troops hardly fits in with that of exciting disaffection among

them by a free distribution of the paper. But there is not a word of truth in Mr. Montagu's statement. The *Bombay Chronicle* was never, at any time, distributed free to anybody. Its popularity amongst the rank and file of the troops, as the only journal which paid any attention to their grievances, was notorious and needed no stimulus. Our machines for a long time past had been unable to cope with the demand for the paper which was daily being sold in the streets at twice and sometimes four times its price.

Would you allow me to say a word in reference to a telegram regarding my deportation in your issue of May 19, from your Bombay correspondent? It was to the effect that the event did not appear to have affected Bombay "although some Native papers condemned it." Will you allow me to say that it has been condemned by every "Native" paper of any importance at all? And even the *Jame-Jamshed*, a sectional organ which has never been a supporter of my policy, has urged the Government to cancel the order of deportation as well as that served on the Directors of the *Chronicle*. As for the extent to which Bombay was affected, your own correspondent cabled a few days later, that a day of fasting and prayer for my return had been appointed and that this day of mourning was widely observed throughout the Province as well as in the city of Bombay. I refer to this not from any egoistical motive, but because it is of the highest importance that the British public should not be misled about the state of Indian opinion in these matters.

Subsequently, on 5 September 1919, Horniman related in the *Bombay Chronicle* under the caption, "How I Was Deported", the circumstances relating to his deportation. The following is a summary of his account:

As I have seen some inaccurate statements in some of the papers regarding incidents occurring in connection with my deportation from British India and very many people have written to me asking for information about the matter, I think it may be of public interest and utility if I describe, in the columns of the *Bombay Chronicle* briefly what occurred from 3 o'clock on the afternoon of April 26, until 4-30 o'clock on the afternoon of May 26, when after a somewhat trying month, I set foot on the shores of England.

On the afternoon of April 26, I was seated in the verandah at my bungalow at Worli, facing the sea. I was sitting up by the Doctor's orders, as my Doctor was afraid that continual lying down might cause the wound of my operation to heal prematurely. At about 3 p.m. my servant informed me that some officers in khaki had come to see me and that some C.I.D. officers seemed to be surrounding the bungalow. I knew then what was about to happen, as only the previous

night I had received confidential information that an order for my deportation had been, or was just about to be signed. I could see my old friend, an Inspector of Police, in the distance making a circular tour of the premises. Afterwards Mr. Griffiths, the acting Commissioner of Police, accompanied by Colonels Street and Gordon Tucker (Physicians belonging to the Indian Medical Service), entered and the proceedings commenced. Mr. Griffiths served me with orders, the first two related to the censorship of and restrictions on the *Chronicle* Press, addressed to the Directors of the *Bombay Chronicle*, and the other an identical order specially directed to me. Having thus given me these elaborate orders as to what I was to do and not to do in Bombay, he then served me, with equal solemnity, with another order telling me to remove myself forthwith from British India. I had then to be examined by Col. Tucker and Col. Street which was done with great care and attention and followed by a consultation outside. Then the decision of the Doctors that I was fit to be sent to England was finally communicated to me. I had previously ascertained that the *S. S. Takada* would sail at 12-30 the next day and I assumed, somewhat naturally, that since the order merely directed me to remove myself from British India by the *S. S. Takada*, that I should be allowed to make my preparations decently and quietly and proceed on board the next morning. I was, however, informed that the Police had orders to see me on board the steamer by 4-30 that very day and that I was to consider myself under arrest. When I went into my bedroom to dress, I was given into the custody of a Police Inspector who was ordered to sit in the room while I was putting on my clothes and assisting my servants, so far as was possible, to pack such things as were ready to hand. Orderlies were waiting to take me and my things. My request that a servant should be allowed to accompany me to the ship was refused. Likewise my request that I should be allowed to see some or at least one of my friends. It was then that I asked the Police Officer whether if I wrote a letter to Sir George Lloyd [the Governor], he would have it sent to him, and he immediately consented. The letter I wrote to 'His Excellency' was to ask that I might be allowed a private interview with my legal adviser before my departure. I had to leave my packing to be finished by the Orderlies and the servants, as the Police Officer said his orders were very strict and peremptory to see me on board immediately. I was carried down the Hill to a motor ambulance that was waiting. At the gate was one faithful friend who had arrived to see me but had not been allowed to come in. I told him, as I passed, that I was not allowed to speak or be spoken to, but that it was good to have seen one friendly face as I left the little home to which I was so much attached. The friendly Police Inspector, mentioned above, was also at the gate, but with dramatic appreciation of the situation, he turned his face away and bent his head, as if witnessing the final obsequies of departing greatness. It was

insufferably hot in the ambulance. The blinds and shutters were all closed as well as the doors at the back and there were five of us inside—myself, one Police Inspector and three Orderlies. Only two or three small apertures let in the air. Then, there was tedious delay. We stopped, for some reason, for some time outside the Brigade Headquarters in Queen's Road and on arrival at the jetty, it was about three-quarters of an hour or more—it seemed an age—before I was taken out of the ambulance and went on board. The delay appears to have been caused by the non-arrival of the Captain of the R.A.M.C. and the two hospital orderlies in whose care I was travelling and to whose charge I had to be handed over. The R.A.M.C. Captain arrived after I had gone on board. The I.M.S. doctor then gave him his instructions and after assuring me for the fifth or sixth time that a voyage to England would do me a world of good—an opinion evidently shared by Government—he said "good-bye" and took his departure. The cabin was a single-berth one, fairly comfortable. The *Takada* was abominably slow, very stuffy in hot weather and very chilly in cold weather; she broke down twice and had to stay three days at Port Said for repairs. The kitchen and saloon staff had evidently never heard of, much less seen, a vegetarian before in their lives and could not realize that a diet of potatoes and eggs was apt to pall. The passengers evinced no geniality of manners and the Captain had no intention of being on speaking terms with the deportee. On the other hand, the voyage had its moments of relief. I cannot be too grateful to the majority of the passengers for leaving me severely alone and there was not a little entertainment derived from the friendly interest in me aroused in the breasts of some nice children through their being told not to speak to "that dangerous man". One little girl, in particular, was thus made to regard a visit to my part of the deck as a real adventure, as soon as those in charge of her were safely out of the way. Some Indian passengers on board were extremely kind but could not do much for me. A gentleman (European from Bombay) lately occupying an official position, was good enough to express his condolences on what he described as the ruin of my career. I assured him that there was no need to worry, as I was only at the beginning and not at the end of it! I was well-guarded on board until the vessel sailed. There was a European Inspector and two European Sergeants and a considerable force of Indian constables both on board the vessel and on the pier. The precautions were so strict, that, as I learnt afterwards, some Indian passengers who came overnight to see their cabins were not allowed access to them. I also learnt later that there was a considerable force of Military, with a squadron of lancers and numerous pickets on duty at Worli during the afternoon while the traffic on the road towards Mahim was held up until I was safely out of the way. I was allowed to spend a couple of hours on the deck after coming on board, but always in company of a Sergeant. After that, however,

I remained closely guarded in my cabin until the vessel left the pier the next day. The Sergeants took turns and I had one sitting in my cabin right through the night, besides a guard of Indian Policemen outside the door, and others, I believe, on the gangways. It was quite gratifying to see our Bombay police doing things with such thoroughness and efficiency. I must here pay a tribute to the consideration, and even kindness, with which all the police officers concerned carried out their extremely unpleasant duties and I was grateful to all of them, from top to bottom, for the consideration they displayed. The highest Police officials especially went out of their way to do what they could to supply the deficiencies of clothing necessary for a voyage to England, for which I was quite unprepared. On Sunday morning they brought me a number of things without which I should have had to travel in a state of extreme discomfort and they could not have been more considerate. The two Sergeants, who had to perform the duty that was in itself unpleasant, carried it with tact and consideration. I spent a night of great anxiety writing some hurried letters to a few friends. I don't think I slept a wink. Always there was a Sergeant sitting opposite my bunk to remind me that I was a prisoner. 11 o'clock came, more time passed and there was no answer to my letter to the Governor. I had given up all hope of seeing anyone, when Mr. Griffiths came back to say that the Governor had consented to allow me to see my friends for five minutes only, the interview to take place in his presence. He also communicated to me a personal message from the Governor, from whom I received also a parcel of books to read on the voyage. I sent back a message of thanks that I had no personal feeling in the matter at all in regard to anyone, however much I regretted and resented what was done. At last, the time came for the voyage to begin. The voyage was very tedious. I spent the first four or five days in my cabin, as the Doctor would not allow me to move about and, for a week after that, I was only able to sit in a chair on deck. For some time, there were appearances of complications necessitating an operation. Capt. Adams of the ship expressed great anxiety. From Port Said onwards I began to feel better and was daily able to take some exercise on deck. Later, Capt. Adams assured me that the symptoms of further trouble had disappeared. I owe a great deal to Capt. Adam's skill and attention and the assistance from the Orderly, Sergeant and Corporal, who nursed me with great care.

Such is the account of my deportation. There are only two other incidents to describe. At Suez, in the middle of the night, the Military Control Officer of the canal came on board and sought me out in my cabin and, looking extremely solemn, said, "Mr. Horniman, I have a very unpleasant duty to perform." The poor man hummed and hawed and at last he said, "I have to request that you will be good enough to give me your assurance not to land at this Port." Asked the reason for asking for such assurance, he confessed that he knew nothing, except

that the military authorities here are evidently very frightened of you and seemed to think that dreadful things will happen if you land in Egypt. I cheerfully gave him the assurance he wanted. This prevented me from landing at Port Said when the steamer arrived there. I received orders not to leave the ship. As Egypt was under Martial Law at the time, protest was useless. An Indian passenger asked an Egyptian policeman why they were watching me. Oh, he said, he is very big man from India who is very dangerous and he may do anything to escape from the ship. Another incident happened at Tilbury. An extremely self-important person arrived and proceeded to subject me to an inquisitorial examination, acting, as he informed me, under the instructions of the War Office and the authorities of the Defence of the Realm Act. He took my answers in an important-looking note book. In answer to his inquiries, I told him that I had been in Bombay for about seven years and I had a few thousand friends there. "Do you know Mr. Gandhi?" Answer: "I do. He is my friend and political colleague." Then some enquiries were made about some of my friends. Then he asked me whether I knew Mr. Cuffe. Answer: "No. He is dead, I think. But Cuffe Parade is in Bombay and was named after him; Colaba is a district in Bombay in which Cuffe Parade is situated." That finished this examination. Then the Military officer ordered the admiring circle of Secret Service men, who had been standing by the whole time, to search my luggage and take possession of all my papers, which they did, taking obvious alarm at a dozen little brown paper balls which might have been bombs, but turned out to be oranges. But the one document they missed, though it was lying openly in the drawer of my trunk, was a sealed envelope addressed to a friend and marked "Private and confidential." For this sort of intelligent work, the taxpayer pays for the whole paraphernalia of Military Control Officers and secret service men and all their doings under the Defence of the Realm Act. Then I got ashore and was quite free once more. My papers were duly returned by the War Office after a week.

Before this account appeared in the Press, a public meeting had been held in Bombay on 25 June which demanded the withdrawal of orders against Horniman. It was a meeting called principally to protest against the Rowlatt legislation and as a part of the business of the meeting the following resolution was passed relating to the order against Horniman. Gandhi presided.

This meeting, under the auspices of the Satyagraha Sabha, prays to His Excellency the Governor of Bombay to withdraw the order of deportation against Mr. Benjamin Guy Horniman, the Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, in view, especially, of the fact that the reason given

by the Rt. Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India [Mr. Montagu] in justification of the order is found to be not capable of being substantiated and that there is perfect peace throughout the Bombay Presidency.

Gandhi, in concluding the meeting, said:

If they could hold similar meetings all over India and conduct them in as orderly a manner as they had done this night, the Government would have to cancel their order against Mr. Horniman. Let the people do their duty and the Government would have to do theirs. Let them hold meetings and pass similar resolutions and their object would be easily attained.

After Bombay had had time to digest the incident and obtain more information about it, a very large public meeting was held under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association, which had, as members, politicians of different parties, to protest against the deportation of Horniman. It was a representative meeting of the citizens of Bombay not confined to politicians of the nationalist school. The audience was very large, of men and women. The Excelsior Theatre was full to its utmost capacity. In the audience there were representatives of all classes and sections of the Indian public in Bombay. As the Press report stated, there was great enthusiasm throughout the proceedings and the speakers were cheered again and again at the mention of Horniman's name. A large number of persons had to stand in the gardens and the passages and the meeting was one of the most remarkable that had been held in Bombay. In the audience were present several persons who were not associated with the nationalist party and had never taken a prominent part in political agitation previously. Dinshaw Petit, the old Parsi Baronet, presided. Dinshaw's name has been mentioned, in the previous pages, as a person who had on all important occasions identified himself with nationalist agitation. He explained the delay in holding this meeting after a lapse of about three months after the event had taken place. The main point of his speech was that it was a question of principle, that Mr. Horniman had been deported without any evidence that he was guilty of flouting the laws of the country, that every man or woman was entitled to an open trial, where he or she might have the fullest opportunity of making his or her defence and if

at such a trial proper punishment was meted out to the guilty, no sane person, with any sense of responsibility, would have anything to say against it. He added that, unless we acquiesced in this policy of Government, it was our bounden duty to raise our voice against it, putting aside our personal likes or dislikes about Mr. Horniman or our petty differences with him or considerations of this party or that party, otherwise it would only mean that public life and the public voice in the city of Bombay was dead. The main resolution was moved by Faiz Tayabji, son of the distinguished Judge, Badruddin Tyabji. If at all Faiz Tyabji had any party affiliations, they were with the Liberal Party. That was the significance of his moving the main Resolution in the following terms:

This meeting of the citizens of Bombay strongly protests against the action of the Government of Bombay in deporting without trial Mr. B. G. Horniman, Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, and who was held in the highest esteem by a large body of public opinion for his fearless advocacy of Indian aspirations and for the valuable services rendered by him to this country, and urges upon the Government, in the interest of justice, the necessity of immediately cancelling the said order of deportation, particularly in view of the authoritative contradiction, published by the Directors of the *Bombay Chronicle*, of the grounds on which the authorities had based the said order.

This meeting further authorises the Chairman to forward the above resolution by wire to the Secretary of State for India, His Excellency the Viceroy, and His Excellency the Governor of Bombay.

Most of the speeches emphasised the principle that an open trial was a fundamental right of every citizen. Amongst those who took a prominent part in this meeting were H. P. Mody, Joseph Baptista, K. M. Munshi, C. M. Cursetji, a retired judge, and the resolution was carried with acclamation and prolonged cheering.

About this time Gandhi had a letter written to Horniman through Mahadeo Desai, to which Horniman sent a reply on 19 May 1919, a summary of which is reproduced below:

First let me say how glad I am that Bombay has been so peaceful and behaved so splendidly. Secondly how touched I am by all the affection and kindness shown for me by everyone. I say this because it would be hypocrisy to pretend that I do not feel personally so much love and kindness extended to me for what I have been able to do, but chiefly I am so delighted to think that the public conscience is

awake and the Indian people know their duty and that, in Bombay especially, they can bear and suffer with dignity and restraint. I am glad to say I am much better now. The doctor who came with me on board the ship told me that I should have to take a long rest, but I find it is not necessary as I am really feeling better now than I had done for a long time. I have joined the Congress deputation and I am working with them but I have not much hope of anything coming to us that is worth having from the present Government and I think the best work can be done in India. In the meanwhile I shall do all that is possible. Mrs. Besant is working with the Moderate deputation.

My own belief is that the feeling in this country has undergone a great change since the present Parliament was elected and if a new election takes place in Autumn, which is very likely, we shall have a House of Commons of quite a different character, from which we shall be able to get some real measure of justice for India and the repeal of the Rowlatt Act. I hope to write more fully to you later.

There was much anxiety about my mother's illness, in addition to which I was very weak and feeble when I landed and had to take things quietly for a fortnight. I was so grateful to get more news from letters received from friends. These are the only letters I have had. I am so anxious to hear from friends in India.

Simultaneously with the removal of Horniman, on the same day, 26 April 1919, the *Bombay Chronicle* Paper and Press were placed, with dramatic suddenness, under official censorship. The circumstances relating to this incident are set out below. As a result of these developments, Gandhi was asked by the Directors of the *Bombay Chronicle* to take up the responsibility of conducting that paper, but before he could take over charge, the journal had been suspended. Though Gandhi could not take up the editorship of the *Bombay Chronicle*, to fill up partially the void created by this suspension, he decided to make *Young India* a bi-weekly. The *Chronicle*, however, was resuscitated after a time, after which Gandhi wrote an article in *Young India*, a brief summary of which is reproduced below:

To the Subscribers and the Readers:

Young India from this week enters upon a new stage. It became a bi-weekly when Mr. Horniman was deported and the *Chronicle* was strangled. Ever since the *Chronicle's* re-birth, however, the Syndicate of that paper and I have been considering the advisability of reverting to the weekly issue of *Young India*. The conversion of *Navajivan* into

a weekly and its coming under my charge has hastened the decision. The burden of conducting a bi-weekly and a weekly is too great a strain on me and the weekly *Young India* will now serve almost as a bi-weekly.

The suddenness of the Government's fell swoop on the *Bombay Chronicle* and their autocratic and unreasonable attitude in connection with it will be revealed by the reproduction here of a few extracts (hitherto undisclosed to the public so far as I am aware) from the correspondence which took place at this time between the Government of Bombay and the Directors of the *Bombay Chronicle*. These directors, were all experienced men, enjoying popular esteem and confidence, who had prominently figured in the agitation for Swaraj conducted by the Home Rule League. These Directors were as follows:

1. Mohamed Ali Jinnah
2. B. G. Horniman
3. Ratansi D. Murarji
4. Ambalal Sarabhai
5. Jamnadas Dwarkadas
6. J. D. Mahalaxmiwalla
7. Umar Sobhani
8. M. R. Jayakar

On 26 April 1919, the day on which Horniman was deported, the Directors received the following notice signed by Mr. J. Crerar, Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Judicial Department. After mentioning the names of the Directors and referring to the Indian Newspaper Co. which owned and controlled the *Bombay Chronicle* Press and Paper the notice proceeded as follows:

And whereas, in the opinion of the Governor of Bombay in Council, there are reasonable grounds for believing that you have acted, are acting and are about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety through or by means of the said Press.

Now, therefore, the Governor of Bombay in Council in exercise of the powers conferred upon him by Rule 3 of the Defence of India (Consolidation) Rules, 1915, is pleased to direct that you shall take order with the said Press in the following manner, viz., that you will prevent the said Press from being used for the printing of any matter for publication unless such matter has been previously submitted to and

approved by Maurice Webb, Esq., I.C.S., New Customs House, Ballard Road, Bombay.

And you are hereby informed that if you knowingly disobey this direction you will be liable to the penalties prescribed by Rule 5 of the Defence of India (Consolidation) Rules, 1915, dated 26th day of April 1919.

By Order of His Excellency the
Rt. Hon'ble the Governor of Bombay
in Council

After receipt of this notice, Jinnah, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, had a talk with Mr. Crerar in which Jinnah asked for more particulars about this pre-censorship imposed by the said Notice. After that, Jinnah got a letter as follows:

Judicial Department
Bombay, 29th April, 1919

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

With reference to our conversation of yesterday afternoon and your letter of today's date, I am directed to inform you that the attitude of Government with regard to the order of pre-censorship will necessarily be determined by the nature of any guarantees they may receive as to the future conduct of the Paper.

Yours truly,
J. Crerar

To this letter the following reply was sent:

Bombay, 30th April, 1919

Dear Mr. Crerar,

I am in receipt of yours of the 29th inst. After our interview, I was under the impression that you would arrange an interview with His Excellency the Governor to enable me to further discuss the matter with him; but, instead of that, you have sent me a formal letter under reply. However, I would like to know whether it is possible for you to indicate the nature of the guarantees as to the future conduct of the Paper that would determine the attitude of Government with regard to the Order of pre-censorship, so that I may place the matter before the Board

I shall be obliged if you can let me have a reply as soon as possible.

Yours truly,
M. A. Jinnah

This drew the following reply from Government:

*Judicial Department,
Bombay, 2nd May, 1919*

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

With reference to your letter of the 30th April, I am directed to say that, as is to be inferred from the circumstances of the case, Government, before re-considering their order of pre-censorship, require guarantees that the conduct of the Press in future will not be liable to objection in the public interest. The particular expedients by which such guarantees can be effectively secured are methods primarily for the consideration of the management of the Press.

Yours truly,
J. Crerar

Jinnah's reply to the above was as follows:

Bombay, 2nd May, 1919

Dear Mr. Crerar,

With reference to your letter of today's date, I have to state that it is unfortunate that the Government cannot be persuaded to state definitely what guarantees they require for the future conduct of the Paper. So far, however, as the Board of Directors is aware there is no justification for the order of pre-censorship, but the Board, with the view of meeting the wishes of Government, is willing to give an assurance that the Paper will be conducted in the future in strict adherence to the policy as laid down in Article 3(c) of the Company's Memorandum of Association and that the conduct of the Paper will be free from objection on the ground of public safety or tranquility. As for the particular expedients by which such a policy will be carried out, they will be determined by the Board as the Board may be advised.

I trust that under these circumstances the Government will re-consider their decision, and withdraw their order of pre-censorship. The Board will venture to point out that there exists a very strong feeling amongst the share-holders of the Company against this Order and that any

further delay in withdrawing the same will largely aggravate such feeling.

Yours truly,
M. A. Jinnah

Article 3 (c) referred to in this letter was as follows:

To carry on business as proprietors etc. of the Press and to conduct a Newspaper in the English language to be published either daily or otherwise as the Directors of the Company may, from time to time, direct, such Paper to be conducted for the purpose of advocating, defending, maintaining, promoting and championing the rights, aspirations and interests of the Indians and the ventilation and discussion of all grievances, questions, matters and things bearing and conducive to a promotion of such rights and aspirations and essential interest, welfare and general benefits of the country and its connection with Great Britain.

In the meanwhile the Government followed their Order of pre-censorship by another order forfeiting the security of the Press. The next letter from Government was as follows:

*Judicial Department,
Bombay, 6th May, 1919*

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

In continuation of my letter of 2nd inst. I am to say that Government note from your letter that the Board of Directors are of opinion that there is no justification for their Order of pre-censorship. Government must infer from this that the matter specified in the Order forfeiting the security of the Press, a copy of which had been forwarded to you, had the approval of the Board. I am to say that, in these circumstances, Government are unable to regard the assurances which you offer as satisfactory. I am to add that, as already intimated in my letter, Government, before re-considering their Order of pre-censorship, require guarantees that the conduct of the Press in future will not be liable to objection in the public interest. Any proposals as to the form which these guarantees should take will be laid before Government and receive their most careful consideration.

Yours truly,
J. Crerar

Jinnah replied on the 7th of May:

Dear Mr. Crerar,

I am in receipt of your reply. The Board are unable to see the grounds which have led the Government to draw the inference mentioned in paragraph 1 of your letter. The opinion of the Board related to the Order of pre-censorship and not to that of forfeiture, the merits of which order were not considered by the Board as the said order is final. The Board regret that Government are adhering to the attitude of vagueness, notwithstanding the endeavours of this Board to meet, if possible, the wishes of Government, if such wishes could be ascertained with definiteness. The Board venture to say that such an attitude indicates an unwillingness on the part of Government to reciprocate the desire of the Board to co-operate with Government in the interest of public peace and tranquility.

I am, however, asked to make this final attempt to request Government to indicate the nature of the guarantees they require. It is impossible for the Board to go on making one proposal after another as to the form of the guarantees, when it is perfectly simple for Government to state clearly what guarantees will satisfy them. The Board trust that the Government will realise that such a course must entail unnecessary correspondence and extraordinary delay, which will occasion a very serious loss to our Press, day after day, until this Board should be so happy as to light on the identical guarantees that will satisfy the requirement of Government.

This correspondence went on for some time during which the Board pursued their most reasonable request, which was not responded to. Ultimately, to end this harrassment and consequent loss to the Press and Paper, the Directors deposited the maximum security under the Press Act. In the meantime, I had become the Chairman of the Board of Directors and on 17 June 1919 I received the following letter from the Government:

*Judicial Department,
Poona, 17.6.1919*

Sir,

The maximum security provided by Section 5 of the Indian Press Act 1910 (I of 1910) having been deposited with the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, by the declared keeper of the Bombay Chronicle Press, the Governor in Council has been pleased to withdraw the Order

of pre-censorship made under Rule 3 of the Defence of India Rules on April 26, 1919. A copy of the order rescinding the previous Order is forwarded herewith for your information and guidance

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. Crerar

The Order which accompanied this letter was of the same date as the letter itself. After the receipt of this letter, the Directors of the *Bombay Chronicle* met and, in order to avoid further interference with or harm to the *Bombay Chronicle* Paper and Press, they issued the following instructions to Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Editor, at a meeting of the Board of Directors held on 18 June 1919, regarding the policy and conduct of the Paper and Press:

(1) The Paper must not indentify itself with any movement having for its object the breach of any laws of the State, directly or indirectly, nor must it express its approval, directly or indirectly, of any efforts which have the above object in view.

(2) The policy enunciated in clause 3(c) of the Memorandum of Association of the Company [quoted above] will be very strictly adhered to, and, in carrying out the said policy, the conduct of the Paper will be free from objection on the ground of public safety or tranquility.

(3) Care will be taken to avoid the use of intemperate expressions which have a danger of being regarded as falling within the purview of Section 4 of the Press Act (I of 1910) or of the several Sections of the Indian Penal Code dealing with the offences that usually arise in connection with Press writings.

(4) Likewise, the Bombay Chronicle Press will not be utilised, directly or indirectly, for the printing or publishing of any matter which has a danger of being regarded as objectionable on the foregoing grounds.

(5) Mr. Brelvi will be responsible to the Board for the proper conduct of the Paper on the foregoing lines and for all breaches thereof, whether committed by himself or any member of his editorial staff, and, in this behalf Mr. Brelvi will exercise absolute control over the subordinate members of the staff.

M. R. Jayakar,
Chairman of the Board

Ultimately our efforts succeeded and the pre-censorship was removed on 18 June 1919. Two days later I went, at his

invitation, to meet Governor Lloyd at Poona, in connection with the conduct of the *Bombay Chronicle*. My diary entry of 20 June 1919, records as follows:

Saw Governor Lloyd at 3. Interview finished at 5-15. He made himself very charming and was frank, pleasant and yet firm. Discussed various matters, mostly confidential. None else present. The reception was all right and contrary to my apprehensions and I found nothing to complain of.

The conduct of the paper during the succeeding period continued to be in accordance with the policy mentioned in Clause 3 (c), and we made our best efforts to keep it so, with the co-operation of friends. Brelvi conducted himself very well in the difficult position he had to occupy and I am quoting a letter which I addressed to him on 22 August to indicate how we maintained a right balance between courageous advocacy of public rights and maintenance of public safety. My letter was as follows:

Flowermead,
35, Warden Road,
22nd August, 1919

My dear Brelvi,

I am writing this to offer you my congratulations on the excellent comments on the Governor's speech contained in today's editorial in the *Bombay Chronicle*. I do not know who wrote that article, whether you or Mr. Joseph. If the latter, please convey to him my congratulations for the courageous and yet gentlemanly tone of the editorial, especially the last few lines thereof.

Wishing you and your staff all success in your endeavours.

Among the friends who helped us in our effort to save the popular paper, was Mahalaxmiwalla, the loyal and capable Manager of the Bombay Tramway Company. He supplied us with a carefully worked out scheme of management, prefacing it with remarks which are quoted below to indicate what public esteem the paper enjoyed at that time:

The *Chronicle* is in great need of all-round improvements and apart from the exigency of economy, it is open to question whether the large sums of money spent over its upkeep have been wisely or purposefully

put to use. A successful business ought to be resourceful in all its dealings, including its expenses, and in case of the *Chronicle* the editorial department should rightly share the responsibility of its upkeep in a businesslike manner. If one department in an establishment goes on spending money unmindful of how the resources of the whole concern are thereby hopelessly depleted, all the other departments suffer equally under the blow. The *Bombay Chronicle* is a public asset of great national importance and it should be upheld with dignity and self-restraint. Once these are lost, it has no foundation to stand upon and the nation will be a loser by its disappearance and death.

These sentiments were in complete accord with my own views in the matter and consequently Mahalaxmiwalla was put in charge of the business leading to a rapid rise in the income of the paper, but unfortunately he could not control the expenditure of the editorial department in the hands of Horniman, and Mahalaxmiwalla made constant complaints to me that the expenses of that department were "on a princely scale and disproportionate." Another member of the public, G. K. Nariman, also sent us his proposals. He had been connected with the paper since its inception and at one time had assisted, regularly for over six months, Horniman in his office. He sent very valuable suggestions for the improvement of the paper, many of which were adopted. Shantaram Dabholkar, a very public-spirited and affluent nationalist, and a devout admirer of Gandhi, joined us on the Board in August 1919, and for a long time the paper appeared as if it had turned the corner. Everyone was anxious to save the paper from the threatened ruin, including our auditor, K. S. Aiyar, who placed his views before the Board prefacing them with an observation of Lord Justice Lindlay that "It is no part of the Auditors' duty to give advice to the Directors, for it is nothing to him whether the business of the Company is conducted prudently or imprudently, profitably or unprofitably." Aiyar made valuable suggestions to control the expenditure of Horniman's editorial department whose cost was rapidly mounting up.

Ultimately matters reached a stage pointing to definite financial chaos and Dabholkar resigned out of sheer despair, in spite of my effort to keep him on the Board. Dabholkar's presence on the Board was extremely useful because of his admirable sobriety and practical sense. I was, therefore, most anxious to retain him on the Board and wrote him a letter

on 18 August 1919, requesting reconsideration of his resignation. In his reply to my letter, he observed most significantly:

I am convinced that there have been and are at present going on very serious irregularities and defalcations in the financial management of the Company, and I am further convinced that, unless you have on the Board of Directors, some persons of our frame of mind, i.e. persons who will look into things for themselves without being enamoured of Mr. Horniman and his methods, the mismanagement must continue. I am sure you must have realised this for yourself. I resigned only when I discovered that our efforts to render the atmosphere of the *Bombay Chronicle* more pure and methodical failed. I hope, therefore, that you will not insist on my continuing as a Director.

Complaints of the staff that their salaries were not paid in time increased. Brelvi of the editorial department, who was most loyally and faithfully doing his best for the paper, wrote frantically asking for a speedy solution of the difficulty. As indicating his great anxiety to save the paper, I will quote from one of his letters to me dated 4 August 1919:

I am anxious to see you and have a talk with you for at least half an hour, of course about the *Chronicle*. There is nothing that I have to complain about. We are going on all right, i.e. comparatively, for the present, but there is something (the expenditure of the editorial department) which I think it is necessary to discuss with you before the Board meets. Kindly let me know where and when I can see you, any day after today.

At the interview Brelvi had with me, he made suggestions about controlling the expenditure, offering his co-operation in the matter, but unfortunately the efforts of the Board in that direction failed.

Ultimately a crisis was reached when Venkatram, a member of the reporting staff and an extreme admirer of Horniman and his methods, was sent to Dharwar to make investigations in connection with the Dharwar shooting tragedy. On his report being published in the *Bombay Chronicle*, a libel suit was filed in the Bombay High Court by the Collector of Dharwar and Police Officers against the Indian Newspaper Company which owned the *Chronicle*. The Court passed a Decree against the Company for heavy damages and costs. As the Company was unable to pay them, it was taken into liquidation. At a later stage, while the concern was in liquida-

tion, I made great efforts to acquire it for the Swarajya Party which was then coming into prominence and in consultation with C. R. Das, I made a good offer for the paper. But I did not succeed and ultimately Belgaumwala purchased the concern. Later he sold it to N. M. Cama who formed the Associated Newspaper Company and the paper is now, I believe, run by that Company.

At a much later date the question was the subject of a debate in the Bombay Legislative Council, when I, as the leader of the opposition, referred to this matter which will be reported in this narrative at the appropriate place.

As stated above, Mr. Montagu spoke of riots and unrest in India but it is strange that notwithstanding such times, Government went on heaping measures calculated to inflame the acuteness of public feeling. For instance, they introduced in the Delhi Legislature an Indemnity Bill to give protection to those officials in the Punjab who had been guilty of terrorism and cruelty. Again, as Vice-President of the Home Rule League, I wired to the Viceroy as follows:

My Council protests against the Indemnity Bill intended to be introduced in the Legislative Council condoning official misconduct in the Punjab. The measure will, in effect, render valueless the result of the Commission of Inquiry and will prejudice results of appeals to the Privy Council [which had been preferred in the meanwhile]. The step is bound to be regarded merely as an attempt to support executive excesses in the Punjab and will cause gravest public distrust and indignation, especially if rushed through with weight of official vote.

We followed this up by a public meeting in Bombay held under the auspices of the Home Rule League. I took part in this meeting. A strong protest was lodged against several acts of Government, including the Indemnity Bill.

Government continued their pin-pricks and a proposal was mooted to raise a Memorial to Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay. As stated above, he had rendered himself extremely unpopular by his behaviour at the War Conference. The proposal was to hold a public meeting in the Town Hall of Bombay to vote him a Memorial on behalf of the City of Bombay. Immediately the idea was mooted, strong objection

was raised to it by the Nationalist Press. A letter appeared in the Press signed by prominent Home Rule Leaguers to the effect that "they would attend the meeting if it was held, and oppose, by motion, amendment or otherwise in a constitutional manner, any proposal to vote such an address to the Governor, on behalf of the citizens of Bombay." On 18 November another letter appeared in the Press addressed to the promoters of the proposal, including Stanley Reed and H. P. Mody, appointed as honorary Secretaries for holding a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay. The letter was signed by prominent Home Rule Leaguers, including Jinnah and myself. The letter called the attention of the promoters to the fact that the record of Lord Willingdon's administration was not such as to deserve a Memorial from the citizens of Bombay and that it would be unwise to rush the idea. The letter gave a warning that if, notwithstanding this general discontent, the meeting was held, the opponents would attend in strong numbers and oppose the motion. The letter asked for intimation of the date of the meeting and requested that arrangements might be made to afford the signatories every reasonable facility for opposing the motion. It was added that this warning was given in order that the proceedings might be conducted with due decorum and order and according to the recognised rules of procedure at public meetings. This was followed by a letter to the Sheriff of Bombay dated 24 November 1918. It is in the Sheriff's power to call public meetings at the Town Hall. The letter was in substance a counter-requisition against the proposal to hold a public meeting. The letter of protest stated that although their previous letter had not been even acknowledged, the signatories thought it their duty to enter the strongest protest against the action of the Sheriff in calling a meeting. The issue raised by the calling of the meeting was of a political and highly controversial character and as such it would be the duty of the Sheriff to remain severely aloof from the controversy and to refrain from acceding to the request of one side to convene the meeting. In the event, however, of the Sheriff's persistence in convening the meeting, the opponents called upon him to hold the meeting at such a time and at such a place that it would be convenient to a large number of citizens to attend it. The protest pointed out the danger of holding the meeting in a place like the Town Hall

in Bombay which could hardly hold 2000 persons. Some other place should, therefore, be selected. The protest ended by stating that amongst those who supported the meeting for the Memorial there were Judges of the High Court, a Commissioner of Police and others whose participation in, or attendance at political meetings would be most undesirable as Government servants and would be in direct contravention of Government rules. It is undesirable that the Sheriff of Bombay in his official capacity should give countenance to such open breaches of Government rules and the letter requested him to give notice to the Government and all other public servants to refrain from attending or participating at the meeting.

On 29 November 1918, a very largely attended public meeting was held under the auspices of the Home Rule League at which the unpopular measures of Lord Willingdon's administration were recalled by the speakers, e.g. the Kaira scandal, support of the Moslem League conspiracy, suppressing Local Self-Government, reactionary education policy, extension of liquor traffic, forcible collection of the War Loan and its results.

The Sheriff sent a reply to the counter-requisition and a copy of the resolution which was proposed to be moved, desiring to place on record the deep sense of gratitude entertained by the citizens of Bombay for the eminent services rendered to the Presidency by Lord and Lady Willingdon who, by their untiring efforts and self-sacrifice, had enabled the Presidency to help in the prosecution of the war to victory and who, by their constant and genuine sympathy for the legitimate aspirations of the people, had rendered themselves popular to all classes in Western India. The resolution also called upon the people to raise a lasting memorial of public utility to Lord Willingdon.

Notwithstanding the opposition, however, the meeting was held in the Town Hall on 12 December 1918. Many prominent men in Bombay supported the Memorial idea including S. R. Bomonji a prominent Home Rule Leaguer. The opponents of the meeting attended and were seeking admission into the Town Hall from very early in the morning. They could not gain admission, so they waited outside on the road. When they entered the Hall a short time before the proceedings actually began, the Hall was packed, including the platform.

The Sheriff read out the notice convening the meeting, in spite of the protest of prominent Home Rule Leaguers. Wacha proposed and Jamshedji Jeejeebhai took the chair. The motion to raise a memorial to Lord Willingdon was moved by Chandavarkar without a speech; no votes were taken and the motion was declared to have been carried "by a very large majority." Tumult arose when the Police Commissioner entered with a police force and announced that the police had taken possession of the Hall, and dispersed the meeting. While the Hall was being cleared the police dealt violently with the opponents of the memorial and some of them received injuries.

It was felt at that time in many quarters in Bombay, by no means loyal to Government or to Lord Willingdon, that the opposition to the Memorial had been carried on in too provocative a manner and that at times it savoured of a personal vendetta against Lord Willingdon engineered by one or two persons who had received a personal affront from him. It was undoubtedly a significant fact of this episode that a number of prominent public leaders with a good record of public service thought it fit to support the memorial, like, for instance, Wacha, Ibrahim Rahimtoola, Vithaldas Thackersey, Hormusji Wadia, Pheroze Sethna, B. S. Kamat, Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Gokuldas Parekh, H. P. Mody, R. P. Masani, J. B. Petit and, lastly, S. R. Bomonji. It was rumoured at this time that, in consequence of this difference, Bomonji had resigned from the Home Rule League. As he had donated a lac of rupees to the League, this rumour assumed great importance and he subsequently gave an interview to the Parsee paper, *Jame-Jamshed*, in which he condemned the excesses of the agitation against Lord Willingdon and assured the public that he had not changed his views as a Home Rule Leaguer, was a staunch follower of Tilak and had left the War Conference along with him, but that he was convinced that it would be unjust to ignore the services of Lord Willingdon because of his one mistake at the War Conference. He went further and accused the principal Home Rule League Leaders of personal spite against the Governor because of certain incidents, unknown to the public, in which the Governor had flouted their personal ambitions. The detailed facts were revealed in a press interview published in the Bombay daily, *Indu Prakash*, of 6 December 1918.

The public sentiment, however, created by the intensive agitation, was so strong that Jinnah, one of the leading opponents, received the gift of a Public Fund, called the People's One Rupee Fund, out of the proceeds of which was raised a memorial to him called the Jinnah People's Memorial Hall in Bombay.

Within three months of this protest arose another occasion when a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held under the auspices of the Press Association of India to urge the Government immediately to repeal the Press Act of 1910, to extend amnesty to all presses and newspapers and to remove the restrictions imposed on Horniman and the ban on his coming back to India. This meeting was one of the few occasions where Nationalists, Liberals and Home Rule Leaguers, all joined on the same platform to support the demand. Chandavarkar presided. He stated that the movement for the repeal of the Press Act had been before the public ever since he began public life and, having been at one time a journalist, for twelve years, he had realized the grave responsibilities of the press and the power it had to make or mar the fortunes of the country. The liberty of the press, he asserted, must remain unadulterated. This was not a new agitation, but had been pressed in a memorial to the Government addressed by the Bombay Presidency Press Association some years ago. The excuse for the Act urged on the side of Government was that the ordinary law was unable to get at "veiled sedition". If this meant sedition which works and spreads in secret, it had no meaning so far as the press was concerned, because a newspaper's writing is open and it works in broad daylight. If on the other hand, it meant covert attack upon Government, intending to overthrow it, he firmly affirmed with his judicial experience that the ordinary law of the land was sufficient to provide against this form of sedition. He referred to a recent decision of a well-known British Judge, sitting on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, stating his considered opinion that words regarded as dangerous to society or social stability change their meaning according as society changes its views and ideals. These words have no fixed import applicable to all time, Chandavarkar added, "Sedition involves such words and its definition in the Indian Penal Code is so elastic as to apply to any seditious writing veiled or unveiled." The

real root of the matter is, he added, that this term "veiled sedition" used in support of the Press Act is a cover for the distrust of our Law Courts by the Executive. The ordinary law being quite adequate for punishing sedition, the more summary proceedings of the Press Act strike the ordinary layman as a denial of full justice and as oppression. The Act had been in operation for several years and our experience does not justify the continuance of the Act on the Statute Book. Things have not improved since the passing of this Act.

Several important men connected with the Press had sent messages of sympathy with the objects of the meeting. Most eminent amongst them, connected with the press, were veterans like Vijayaraghavacharya of Salem, Kasturirang Iyengar of *The Hindu* and Shrinivas Shastri.

Gandhi moved the following resolution:

That this public meeting of the citizens of Bombay held under the auspices of the Press Association of India, presses the Government for the repeal of the Indian Press Act on the grounds:

Firstly, that the principle and policy of the Act are not only contrary to the spirit and tradition of the British, but, as experience has proved, they increase prejudice against Government, making the remedy worse than the disease;

Secondly, that the repeal of the Act will further the ends and be in fulfilment of the policy of trust and co-operation inaugurated by His Majesty's gracious proclamation made in December 1919; and

Lastly that the repeal will complete, in a marked manner, the liberal policy already adopted by Government by the removal of restrictions imposed on certain papers under the Act.

This public meeting also appeals to the sense of national unity of Indian journalists to rise to the occasion of the new era and realise fully that that era will throw on it greater responsibility than heretofore in inspiring all classes of people in India with a spirit of mutual co-operation, harmony and ordered progress, while fearlessly and with dignity upholding the peoples' case and representing their wrongs and advancing the cause of constitutional freedom and Indian nationality.

In the course of his speech, Gandhi regretted the absence of Horniman at this meeting and pointed out his great services as an able editor in infusing public spirit into the life of the country. He could not say that he agreed with what Horniman said or wrote. He thought on occasions that the language used by him was more suited to a Western than an Eastern

country and sometimes he did not like what Horniman wrote, but the question was one of liberty of the press and liberty of public speech and it was for this reason that they asked that the restrictions imposed on Horniman's movements should be removed. He agreed with Chandavarkar that a mere modification of the Act would not suffice and that the Act should be repealed in its entirety, and that the ordinary provisions of the Penal Code should suffice to meet the situation. He added that while the public claimed the freedom, the editors and others connected with journalism had their responsibility. He himself was the editor of one of the youngest journals in India. He knew what the troubles and worries of an editor were. It would be an epic of the length of the Mahabharat to mention them, but he considered it as part of his duty as editor to separate the chaff from the wheat and publish only that which was good for the country. This was a good rule to follow for all editors.

I seconded this resolution. I added that the occasion was fraught with greater significance by reason of the fact that we believed, and rightly so, that we were on the eve of a new era, whatever that word might mean and that in the days to come there would be no occasion for the application of those measures of distrust, embitterment, opposition and hostility which were the basic principles of the Press Act. We believe, I said, that whatever justification there might have been for the Act in the year 1910, there would be none under the new order when the Government would be carried on on the principle of mutual trust and co-operation. Besides, the Press Act had been an enormous failure and succeeded in doing more harm than good, e.g. the great havoc done by the application of the Act to some parts of India like the Punjab, where under the regime of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Pressmen were made to grovel on the ground like helots.

The resolution was carried with acclamation after it had received further support.

Then came a resolution conveying, *inter alia*, our thanks to the Government of Bombay for cancelling the securities deposited under the Press Act by certain Presses and Newspapers and requesting that similar action might be taken in the remaining cases.

Natarajan then moved a resolution requesting the Government of Bombay to remove the restrictions on Horniman's

return to India as a measure of justice in consonance with the spirit of the Royal Proclamation. He mentioned in this connection the treatment given to the *Bombay Chronicle* under the Press Act. Government had levied a security of Rs. 10,000 on the Chronicle Press invoking the Defence of India Act. A pre-censorship was imposed on the *Chronicle*. Natarajan referred to the proceedings in the House of Commons where the Secretary of State had stated that the return of Horniman was dependent entirely on the discretion of the Government of Bombay. The result was that Horniman could not get a passport or a passage to Bombay. Natarajan pleaded that, as a measure of mere justice, the restrictions be removed and that the *Chronicle* be relieved of the security. The motion was seconded by Faiz Tyabji, and was carried unanimously.

While participating in these public activities, I found time to get more and more into contact with students' movements. My contact with them had begun as early as 1897 when, as stated above, I had helped to establish the Aryan Education Society's High School in Bombay. Since then, such contact had increased, e.g. when I worked as a Professor at the Government Law School for seven years. My interest in students' movements remained intact during the years 1917 to 1920. I began with a speech at the Wilson College in Bombay on "National Outlook" delivered on 17 February 1919. I briefly sketched the marvellous changes which had occurred since my last speech at that college eight years earlier, leading to a greater realisation that India was no longer merely a geographical expression; that Tagore, J. C. Bose and Indian soldiers had invested Indian citizenship with unexpected honour and significance. I referred to the opportunities provided by College life for the true development of Indian citizenship, a sense of social unity coupled with individual freedom. Among the subjects most valuable for the purpose, I instanced the study of English history, indicating the struggle for liberty, the misuse of irresponsible power and the development of a democratic temper. Indian history, especially that of Rajputs and Mahrattas, should indicate a true sense of chivalry, honour and loyalty to the country. To indicate the burdens of citizenship I quoted the following from Galatians:

*Bear ye, one another's burdens
And so fulfil the Law;
But let every man prove
His own worth;
Then shall he have rejoicing
In himself alone,
For, every man shall bear
His own burden.*

This speech was followed by an address at the 2nd Convention held in Bombay of the Presidency Students' Federation. This was an important speech, but a brief extract from an abbreviated press report will indicate its nature. The first resolution was as under:

This Convention, representing the students of the Presidency of Bombay, respectfully offers to His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor their unswerving loyalty and their hearty congratulations on the glorious victory the Allied Forces have won over militarisation and autocracy and prays to God that the victory may herald an era of peace, justice and freedom among nations.

This Convention further affirms the students' unswerving resolve to fit themselves to be worthy to share in the trials and triumphs of the Empire, of which they are devoted citizens.

Resolutions were then passed in favour of the Swadeshi movement. The Convention held out its hand of co-operation to the Muslim Students' Convention which had been established about this time and assured it of co-operation and sympathy. It then proceeded to resolve that, realising the importance in national life of the development of the various vernaculars of India and the enormous difficulty of conducting studies in schools through the medium of English, the convention appealed to the educational authorities of Bombay to permit and encourage the use of the vernaculars as the media of instruction in schools and to give the principal vernaculars of the Presidency a proper place in college curricula. It is significant that this demand, which has during recent times gathered great momentum, was made as early as 1919.

Resolutions were then passed expressing grave concern at the deterioration of physique among the students, condemning the practice of early marriage and dowry, advocating the

development of a Volunteer Corps for social service, a poor boys' fund for the help of destitute students, social study classes on important problems of Indian life, periodical visits to different parts of the Presidency for that purpose, formation of correspondents groups, starting of co-operative societies dealing in books and other articles useful to students, opening night schools for working men and women.

The Convention concluded the session by passing the following resolutions:

The Convention places on record its emphatic disapproval of the rules in certain institutions whereby students are compelled to study Faiths other than their own, the object of such compulsion being proselytisation and the Convention, therefore, urges upon the Government the withholding of educational grants from institutions refusing to accept a conscience clause.

The Convention draws the attention of College and school authorities and of the Government of Bombay to the inadequate hostel accommodation provided for University and school students in the Bombay Presidency and to the hardships of students living in private rented houses.

The Convention expressed its gratitude to the Bombay Government for their decision to make the University Company a permanent unit in the Indian Defence Force. It asked the University of Bombay to introduce the compartmental system in university examinations and to hold such examinations twice a year. It recommended the establishment of an All India Students' Convention and a permanent All India Students' Council, and welcomed the action of the Government of Bombay in making liberal grants to Primary Education and in appointing a committee to suggest the means of affording further facilities for higher education in Bombay. It called on the Authorities to take definite steps to improve the position of women and to provide for them ample and appropriate educational facilities. It condemned the practical exclusion of technical and industrial training from educational institutions and regarded it as a grave defect in the existing system of education and asked Indian leaders and the University of Bombay to take early steps to remove this defect.

This variety of resolutions, concerned practically with

every important phase of student life, will indicate what intelligent interest the students of Bombay then took in the problems affecting students' welfare and the speeches made in support of the several resolutions afforded convincing evidence of such concern. My own speech at the Federation was very short. I said:

The first object of the Federation was to unify the students of the Presidency, and this object, it appears to me, had been successfully carried out. The second object was to promote the study of national problems. I am one of those who believe that students had their legitimate place in the study of the politics of their country. This right had been enjoyed by students all over the civilized world and there appeared to be no justification for withdrawing from the Indian students' attention contemporary politics as a matter of study and inquiry.

In the study of national problems, your success would largely depend on the extent to which you aimed at developing a sense of national unity. Here lay perhaps your best work for which your college life provided an excellent opportunity and I cannot help feeling that in spite of the charges made against our system of education, perhaps in few other countries were the opportunities so wide and frequent for the formation of a habit of mind which recognises the essential unity of the several castes and communities juxtaposed for education in the same class-room. If you could fully realize the significance of such an arrangement, what an immense field you would find opened up for the formation of broad and unsectarian friendships. Broad-based friendships formed at school or college will secure that knowledge, sympathy and toleration which will hasten the work of nation-building.

I want you to guard against another danger and that is, that as you advance in life you will be told by many critics, some ignorant, others selfish and wicked, that India can never become one Nation, that it will ever remain a geographical expression. This untruth loses sight of the principle, which the history of many important communities in this world teaches us, that a Nation, in the full sense of the word, is either a product of nature or of human endeavour. It is composed of men who may be of one race, or who, if not of one race, have lived together so long, entering so fully into every kind of free relation with one another, that they have overcome the immediate impediments to intercourse, and are able, in the most important things of life, to feel with one another and to understand their feelings. Aristotle said that "a city ought to be composed of such number of men as could hear the voice of the herald." We may say that a Nation ought to be composed of men who, however numerous, can feel the throb of one emotion, one impulse of life, and who, by such community of

feeling, are differentiated from other groups not habituated to a life of organic unity. There is needed for all this process the memory of great things done, great trials undergone, great experiences of sorrow and joy encountered together. This is a slow and continuous effort, not the work of a day, nor achieved without the long and severe throes which attend all spiritual birth. Such is the miracle of nation-building.

I am, therefore, pleading for your making a deliberate and sustained effort to take the fullest advantage of the corporate life, which our colleges, defective and imperfect as they are, provide for you. Such an outlook on the differing sects and creeds of our neighbours involves a readjustment of our religious conceptions. As an old Hindu saint said, "Religion is an attitude of the mind; not a matter of forms and ceremonies, not even of faith and belief." The attitude has to be consistently practised through all the differences of our daily life, small and great. Shri Krishna was asked to define spiritual Yoga. He replied, much to the bewilderment of his pious devotees, that Yoga was excellence in the performance of our daily duties. This reminder is necessary, especially in an age when religious life takes the form of extreme isolation and introspection. We have to realise that the essential features of the truly religious attitude are humility, sympathy and toleration, remembering again the teaching of Shri Krishna that, "Whatever is royal, good, beautiful and mighty, understand thou, that these go forth from My Splendour."

ON 20 May 1920, I was invited to visit Sind and address a Students' Federation there. That was the first occasion I had to visit Sind. Later, several visits followed, leading to increasing contact with Sind, its geographical and social features. This contact enabled me later when I was the leader of the Opposition in the Bombay Legislative Council frequently to adjust affairs with what was called the Sind Bloc, consisting of very amiable, generous and hospitable Muslim leaders, who, unfortunately, owing to defective political experience, voted generally with the Government. But even on such occasions, the knowledge I had gained of the student world of Sind enabled me to tide over difficulties which might otherwise have proved insuperable.

This visit to Sind I always recalled with pleasure—the generous hospitality, the broad and sympathetic understanding of students' problems, the free atmosphere amongst boys and girls, these were the attractive features which pleased me the most. I took occasion, during the three days I spent in

Hyderabad, to get into touch with as many aspects of Sindhi life as I could. My diary entries record as follows:

- 28 May 1920: Reached Hyderabad, Sind at 12 noon. Good reception. Public procession dropped at my request. Session at 6 p.m. in Homestead Hall. Fairly large attendance. Finished at 8-30. Witnessed amateur play, 'Deti Leti' (about the evil of marriage dowries) from 9-30 to midnight. Music and acting very inferior.
- 29 May 1920: Excursion to National College and outskirts of Hyderabad—the day's outing. Music competition inferior. Sports good. In Subjects Committee, lot of wrangling, but proved sensible in the end. Returned home at 10-30 after seeing the Indus Political talk till 1-30 a.m.
- 30 May 1920: Morning sitting of Convention of Sind students. Tame affair. Speeches in Sindhi. Little enthusiasm. I spoke at end recommending the study of Sanskrit and Music to get out of communal atmosphere. Speech appreciated. Left at 4-30 for Bombay. A good send-off.

What struck me as an unexpected feature of Sind society was the prominence of women's problems in the social world. Addressing my youthful audience I said:

I am not going to talk of flashy things and remembering that you desired to be engaged in training yourself for service to your country, I would remind you of certain important matters. I realise your great enthusiasm and the high nobility of your aspirations and resolves. You desire to take up bold and exalted causes to achieve the freedom of the country but, unfortunately, we are living in days when our struggles have to be carried on in extremely prosaic surroundings, in which the *deus ex machina* is conspicuous by his absence. The contest is more between forces than individuals. It is a patient and long-drawn struggle, where the resultant victory is achieved, not by a single, rapid or glorious act of self-immolation performed in public sight, but by a long, continuous and wearisome process of daily endeavour, silently undertaken and humbly performed, in the obscure recesses of the mind, and in an environment of no greater publicity than our home, school or college. It is this unfortunate circumstance that makes the struggle so difficult. The enthusiasm of the moment worked up to white heat has to be distributed over patient years of daily and humble endeavour, and as Gods usually do not descend amongst men in the present age, we have to rely on purely human resolves, with their characteristic frailty and uncertainty. Hence arises in modern times the importance of habits as opposed to moods, of methods as opposed to feats, of patient daily endeavour as distinguished from momentary flights of emotion. I need

not therefore offer any apology for making an apotheosis of daily habits, as confirming our pious resolutions.

When you grow older and descend into practical work, you will find that the man who achieves a great purpose is not the man of mere noble impulses momentarily felt, but the man who has, by a long course of training, acquired the habit of persistent thought and action. I will add that these habits have to be formed while you are at school or college. It will be a disadvantage to allow the day-to-day politics to exercise an undue influence on your youthful mind, for, current politics frequently takes colour from the passions and antagonism raised by the fury of the hour. At your age, it is necessary to develop a habitual adherence to truth, a keen sense of justice, indomitable courage, and a lively sense of discrimination. Our struggle being in substance moral, it is the moral element which constitutes the greatest attraction, though the path of politics is often dusty and raises obscuring storms. At your age, it is necessary to develop a frank and fearless disposition; without however departing from the true limitations of decency and decorum. A mind free from selfish fear or any abjectness, a mind that is aware of its strength and capabilities is the need of the hour. Let us carefully guard against the obsession, that we are an inferior people, constitutionally and perennially inferior, to the virile race that rules over India. This effort will tax all your attention.

About this time the Home Rule League adopted the idea of entering the Bombay Municipal Corporation and formed a group for that purpose. We felt that it was necessary for the League to establish contact with the Municipal affairs of Bombay and accordingly we worked hard for a few days up to the day of the election. This branch of activity was entirely new to me and knowing that the hours of the Corporation meetings, viz. in the afternoon, would be most inconvenient to me as I was then busy at the High Court, I declined the invitation to stand as a candidate but ultimately I had to agree to the decision of the Home Rule Party. The resources at our command in Bombay were adequate. It was my first experience of how elections were conducted in Bombay and I looked forward to that experience to be of use later if and when I stood for the Bombay Legislative Council. The rules relating to Municipal elections were strict regarding the provision of motor cars and refreshments, but we adhered to them with the greatest scrupulousness.

The election took place on 27 January 1919, at Gowalia Tank. A note in my diary of that date is as follows:

Municipal election day. Busy whole day. Brisk voting. Most unlikely supporters came from the students and graduates. The Home Rule League vote was however divided as also the Appellate Side High Court vote. Their voting was perfunctory. The Original Side Bar vote was divided between H. P. Mody and Velinkar

I was, however, elected with some other members of the Home Rule Party. I attended the Corporation as often as I could, considering my engagements at the Bar. The occasions to participate in the debates of the Corporation were consequently limited. 3-30 p.m. was a most inconvenient hour. We suggested that the meetings might be held after dinner, but the medical men and other members to whom the time 3-30 p.m. was favourable, objected in strong numbers. I can, however, recall only a couple of my speeches at the Corporation, for instance, on a resolution about appointments to higher posts which, it was feared, were governed by communal considerations. Some members had hinted at corruption in the Selection Committee. I suggested that the selection might be made by the entire Corporation.

The second time I spoke was when the revised Municipal Constitution proposed that rate-payers paying an assessment tax of Rs. 20 per annum should alone have the right of voting at the Municipal election. This was intended to deprive University graduates of the right they had till then enjoyed. I, therefore, sounded a strong note against such deprivation, especially as the fact was that graduates had exercised this right with conspicuous care and discrimination.

When Mahadeva Choubal was appointed a member of the Bombay Governor's Executive Council, he took up the question of improving Secondary Education. The Indian Universities Commission of 1902 had recommended that no new second-grade colleges should be affiliated to the University and that existing colleges, which could not hope to rise to the first grade by adding classes teaching up to the B.A. degree, should revert to the position of a High School. Gurudas Banerji had dissented from this recommendation of the Commission. Nor did the Government of India favour this recommendation. The Senate of the Bombay University had also disapproved of it and agreed with the Government of India. The Report of the Director of Public Instruction for the Quinquennium ending with 1911-12 stated that there was

a general belief that, for the purpose of the University, the High School course ought to be extended by at least one year, but he was of opinion that it would not be practicable to do so for various reasons mentioned in his Report. In 1912 the Syndicate of the Bombay University appointed a Committee to inspect the colleges affiliated to the University and this Committee, criticising the swollen classes for the Previous Examination in most of the colleges and the want of adequate supervision, suggested that the over-pressure might be relieved, that the standard of the Matriculation and consequently the standard of instruction in the High Schools should be raised up to the limit of the First Year course. The Committee proposed that certain selected High Schools should be recognized for the purpose of the First Year course. The Director of Public Instruction was opposed to this suggestion also, as he was of opinion that a boy got much more out of a year at college with all its defects than he would out of another year in a school. The Governor's Cabinet, however, held a different view and agreed with the opinion of the Bombay University Committee and suggested that the Government might take up the question of experimenting with one High School, viz. the Poona High School.

The Syndicate of the Bombay University had in the meanwhile declined to entertain applications for the affiliation of a Previous class attached to a High School and the Senate, it was expected, would not go back upon its previous decision. Various authorities of the University had expressed different opinions in this connection, including Sir John Heaton who happened to be the Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University, and an alternative proposal was made that a complete separation ought to be made between the life, the teaching and the atmosphere of a school and a college and that the only way to keep students longer at school, if it was so desired, was to have a higher standard for the Matriculation and a three-year college course instead of a four-year one, and if there was pressure in the Previous Class at colleges, the only satisfactory way of meeting the difficulty was by opening new colleges.

Choubal therefore proposed, as a remedy, that second-grade colleges should teach only the First Year course which should be removed from the college into the school course. The basis of his proposal was that the work done by students in the

first two years at college or up to the Intermediate course was work of a character which ought to be and was ordinarily done in public schools and secondary schools in England, and though his proposal of removing only the First Year college course into the secondary school was a half-measure, the experiment was worth trying. The solution lay, he thought, in the direction of extending the secondary school course somewhere up to the present Intermediate course, so that the entrance to the University would be only for the few students who would care to go into the colleges after nine years in a secondary school. He referred in this connection to the opinion of the professors of colleges, who, owing to the growth of inferior English schools and variable standard of Matriculation, found it increasingly difficult to cope with large numbers of ill-prepared students unable to understand and follow the lectures.

Choubal added a further argument that, when the college course began after the Intermediate standard, there would be, further, one more advantage, viz. residential colleges would attain a higher and purer standard of University life, the number of students would not be too large to be dealt with, and consequently greater individual attention would be bestowed on the students and, in course of time, it would be possible to develop one or two universities which would come up to the standard of the universities in Western countries. This would also take the universities nearer to the goal of teaching universities in course of time. Notwithstanding the change effected by the Universities Act, he added, in the purposes and objects for which a university was deemed to be incorporated, the University of Bombay, during the last twelve years, had done nothing towards the desired conversion into a teaching university but had continued as before to be an institution purely for the purpose of ascertaining by examination the proficiency of the scholars and giving them adequate degrees.

Choubal, therefore, proposed and the Governor called a Conference at the Secretariat for the purpose of considering the question whether it would not be possible to decide for the present that all Arts colleges in Poona and Bombay should admit students only after the Intermediate course and relegate the students in the first two years in all the colleges to Government and aided High Schools which should provide for

teaching up to the Intermediate course in their schools. Roughly speaking, it was stated that there were about three thousand students studying in the first two years' course in all the seven colleges in the Presidency. Government had limited the number of admissions to these classes in the colleges owned by them such as Elphinstone and Deccan College, but it was not possible to have a similar limitation in private colleges. It was possible for Government, Choubal added, to induce the colleges to accept this proposal by offering a larger Government aid to provide the necessary teaching staff for these additional courses and for giving the necessary equipment, buildings and other facilities. It was admitted that for some time there would be High Schools teaching up to the higher course but this state of things would be in no way different from the one when the present seven years' course was divided among different schools, some teaching the first three English standards and the others the four higher standards.

The Conference was, therefore, called to thrash out this question in spite of its inherent difficulties and a Committee was to consider and submit a concrete scheme to Government on the lines indicated above. By a letter dated 9 August 1916, I was invited to attend the conference at the Secretariat, Bombay, which Lord Willingdon proposed to call for considering the question stated above. I attended this Conference and took part in the discussions which were held there. As a founder and later Principal of the Aryan Education Society's High School, to which a reference has been made in a previous chapter, I was conversant with the problems of secondary education and had frequent opportunities to discuss them with the promoters of secondary schools in Bombay. Likewise, I had my share in the discussion of these questions whenever they came before the Senate of the University of Bombay. I, therefore, fully participated in the discussion which took place at the Secretariat. Most of the persons invited were against the innovation proposed and I was asked to submit a minute in writing stating my views for or against Choubal's proposal. We were told that the question was so vital that we should take special care to put our views in writing with clarity, and give Government the opportunity of arriving at a satisfactory decision in the matter.

I, therefore, put in a minute, as follows:

The number of students in the colleges in Bombay had no doubt largely increased during recent years and the principal aspect of the question was how to meet this situation. The simple answer is that, so far as the overcrowding in colleges is due to a permanent cause, viz. the natural growth of higher education, the only satisfactory way of meeting this difficulty is by opening new colleges. The Bombay University has been in existence for about sixty years and it is a matter of congratulation that the number of students desirous of taking the benefit of higher education has been steadily increasing. It is consequently the duty alike of the University and of Government to encourage this tendency and to meet it in a natural and legitimate way, i.e. by opening more colleges. The alternative proposed by Government to relieve the congestion in colleges by transferring either the first year or two years' course to the High School would not meet the difficulty and was attended with serious drawbacks. It is not necessary here to go into the question whether in a backward country like India, financial difficulties should be allowed to check the natural growth of higher education and equally the natural increase in the number of colleges and whether these difficulties may not be overcome by appeals to the generosity of the people and by giving to indigenous educational enterprise, a free and unfettered scope to meet the growing demand. It is, however, necessary to consider how the proposed course will affect higher education and will achieve the end in view. At present there are about 3,000 students studying in the first two years' courses in all the seven colleges in the Presidency. They will have to be sent back to the High Schools. This step will not be appreciated and most of these students will drop off and only a few select students will join the colleges.

I may add that the life and atmosphere and the influences at college do incalculably more to elevate and liberalize the mind than at school. A boy got, as is well-known, much more out of a year at college with all its defects than he would out of another year at school. A Principal of the Elphinstone College, when addressing the students on the eve of his departure from that post, once remarked, "You do not go to college to learn a few books, for that you do go elsewhere, but you go to colleges to acquire the refinement, the tone, the air of a gentleman and a scholar." I agree, I said, with this view. It is, therefore, a matter of great regret to me and others of my view that several thousands of young men should be deprived of the ennobling influences of university life, though confined only to a year or two, and the whole of their life blighted so to say for want of that vivifying and stimulating atmosphere so necessary and vital to students at that age which forms the most impressionable period of their youth.

It is said that half the number of the Previous class drop off after the first year, i.e. after the first failure but that one year makes all the difference in their life and it is for this influence which the pre-

year works on the whole of their life that their parents, though poor, keep them at college for that year. They think that the advantage for the sacrifice is that it broadens the mind of the youth.

Similar minutes were put in by other educationists with the result that the proposal was ultimately abandoned and up to this day the first two years' classes are held in colleges and not in school.

The proposal was revived when in much later years a Committee was appointed by the Government of Bombay to draft a scheme for the Poona University, but, after careful consideration the proposal was not accepted.

During this era characterised by cramming, within a short space of a few years, most momentous changes in the social, political, domestic and educational condition of the people, the proposal has now been revived and forms the principal recommendation in the Report of the Secondary Education Commission appointed by the Government of India in October 1952.

The proposal is described as the "New Organisational Pattern" and is as follows:

1. Under the new organisational structure, education should commence after a four or five year period of primary or Junior Basic education and should include (a) the Middle or Senior Basic or Junior Secondary stage of three years and (b) the Higher Secondary stage of four years.

2. During the transitional stage, the existing High Schools and the Higher Secondary Schools should function on the lines laid down.

3. The present Intermediate stage should be replaced by the Higher Secondary stage which should be of four years duration, one year of the present Intermediate being included in it.

4. As a consequence of the preceding recommendations the first degree course in the University should be of three years duration.

5. For those who pass out of the High School there should be provision for a pre-University course of one year, during which period the scheme of studies should be planned with due regard to the needs of the degree or the professional course to be taken by the students and special emphasis

should be placed on the quickening of intellectual interests, training in method of study at college and the study of English so long as it continues to be the medium of instruction at the University.

In all my activities during this period, I did not lose sight of the claims of the country's defence on youthful India and in my frequent speeches addressed to college students, I pressed these claims on the attention of the younger generation. My views found an outlet when later, in the middle of the year 1918, I received an intimation from the Government of Bombay that I had been appointed a member of the Indian Defence Forces (Indians' Section) Committee under the War Purposes Board. I accepted this opportunity and soon thereafter participated in a War Conference which was called in Bombay, *inter alia* for giving to the King, on behalf of the Bombay Presidency, "an assurance of the determination of the Presidency to continue to do her duty to her utmost capacity in the great crisis through which the Empire is passing." My colleagues on this Committee, among others, were Natarajan, Surendranath Bannerji, Samarth, Hormasji Wadia, Narottam Morarji, Horniman, Jehangir Petit, Bhulabhai Desai, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Vithaldas Thackersey and Cowasji Jehangir. I worked on this Committee and made use of the opportunity to popularise among students the call of the defence of the country. On 3 August 1918, I joined several of my colleagues on this Committee in making a public appeal published in the *Bombay Chronicle* of that date. In that appeal we stated:

For many years, Indians have been demanding, as their right and privilege, that they should be allowed to join the Volunteer Forces for the internal defence of their country and now the opportunity has come. The new Indian Section of the Indian Defence Force opens up a way for all, who have their country at heart, to enlist for the defence of their motherland and for the cause of the liberty for which the Allies are now fighting. The opportunity is unique, the occasion great and the cause inspiring. It remains for us to do our part. It is now a matter of history that Indians have shed their blood on the battlefields of Europe and Asia and have brought, to the good name of India, a record of distinction of which we may well be proud. While these men are so nobly doing their duty away from home, let us, who remain at home, undertake the obligation of assisting in the internal defence

of our country, thereby releasing others for the fighting line. The recent announcement relating to the granting of King's Commissions in the Indian Army has opened up splendid possibilities of a Military career to those, who, by their ability and training, show a fitness for that calling. The way is now open for a man who today is living the life of a humble clerk or schoolmaster or a shop assistant, to rise to the command of a Regiment.

The appeal was successful and, on 3 February 1919, the Government War Purposes Board sent me an acknowledgment of the assistance I had rendered.

Jallianwala Baug Massacre to Amritsar Congress (1919 to 1920)

THE Jallianwala Baug massacre, more heinous than the Glencoe massacre of the year 1692, so notorious in British history, took place in the Punjab on ¹³15 April 1919. A brief sketch of the massacre, its origin, malevolence, enormity and its effects on the political history of India, will prove instructive even at this date.

The state of the Punjab about the time of this tragedy was as described below.

The Punjab was then inhabited mostly by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The chief occupation of the people was agriculture, but other industries were making headway. The Punjab supplied the flower of the British Indian Army. In the first world war the contribution of the Punjab to the army was the largest among the Provinces of India.

Amongst the fighting classes, the Sikhs held the foremost place, the Rajputs and Jats came next. The Rajputs and Jats of the western and southern parts were mostly Muslims and those of the eastern and northern parts were Hindus. The Jats of the central Punjab were mostly Sikhs.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the then Lieut. Governor of the Punjab, said in a speech, "we can claim to have raised about three lacs sixty thousand combatants during the four years of the war or more than half the total raised in the Indian Army, excluding of course the splendid contribution from our gallant neighbours and allies in Nepal."

To protect such a helpful Province from what Sir Michael thought was the contagion of advanced political ideas and the consequent commotion and unrest, he asked the Government

of India for special measures and, in response to his pressure, the Defence of India Act was passed as an emergency measure, to cope with the revolutionary outbursts that were feared during the time of the war.

In spite of assurances to the contrary by the Government of India, Sir Michael O'Dwyer used the Act for the purpose of restraining political freedom. To mention only a few instances, the Act was used to intern Mrs. Besant and her associates, because they represented, in its intense form, the Indian Home Rule movement. In that movement there never was any suspicion of violence entertained even by its worst enemies. Sir Michael, likewise, prohibited the entry into his Province of Tilak and Bipinchandra Pal and interned hundreds of local men for little or no cause. He gagged the vernacular Press, and prevented nationalist papers edited outside from circulating in his Province. He prohibited the circulation even of pre-censored vernacular papers and imposed such strict restrictions that it became impossible for the people of the Province to have a free interchange of views or a free ventilation of their grievances in the public press. Having done all this, he tried to give the impression to outsiders that the people of the Punjab were the happiest under his rule. The public, therefore, had grown thoroughly distrustful of his Government and had hoped that, after the termination of the war, in view of India's unique war record and the Montagu Declaration of August 1917, foreshadowing reforms leading to responsible government, the Defence of India Act would be repealed and the people would have some relief from the unwelcome attentions of the Secret Service Department.

The people were, therefore, taken by surprise when two Bills were sprung upon them. The speech of Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy, ushering the Bills in the Imperial Legislative Assembly added to popular discontent, as it showed that the Bills were principally designed to answer the fears of the British element in the Civil Service regarding their safety under the ensuing Reforms. The Indian opposition was voiced by Gandhi in a letter addressed to the Press, of which very little notice was taken by the authorities. It may be stated, however, that the Defence of India Act had at this time brought under complete check all violence, if any, in the Punjab and Bengal, as the Government itself claimed. It was

common knowledge and the Government admitted that at the time these two Bills were published, there was little or no revolutionary crime in India. These two Bills were the two parts of what was popularly called the "Rowlatt Act". The Act took this popular name from Mr. Justice Rowlatt of England, the President of what was called the Sedition Committee, which was appointed by the Government of India on 10 December 1917, to "investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India and to examine and consider the difficulties that had arisen in dealing with such conspiracies and to advise as to the legislation, if any, necessary to enable Government to deal effectively with them." The Sedition Committee was required to sit *in camera*. It presented its report on 15 April 1918. With the exception of four sittings which it had at Lahore, the Committee had all its sittings in Calcutta. Justice Rowlatt in his covering letter addressed to the Government admitted, "as directed by the order appointing us, we have on every occasion sat *in camera*." The public had no knowledge of the nature of the evidence given before the Committee or the names of those who gave it. Naturally, the witnesses were not cross-examined on behalf of the public, for it was totally unrepresented before the Committee.

The two Bills constituting the Rowlatt Act were the outcome of the recommendations of this Sedition Committee. On a perusal of the Report and the recommendations, it appeared to Indian leaders that the state of things, which the Act was intended to deal with, did not exist at the time and they found it difficult to understand why any attempt was made to place it on the Statute Book.

When the Act was introduced in the Central Legislature, Srinivas Sastri, who was then a member along with Surendranath Bannerji, Sapru, Malaviya, Jinnah, V. J. Patel, and G. S. Khaparde, made a speech opposing its introduction. The speech was then regarded as memorable for its bold and true presentation of the Indian view. It dealt with the arguments advanced on the Government side; for instance, that innocent people need not be afraid of the measure. Sastri replied:

When Government undertakes a repressive policy, the innocent are

not safe. Men like me would not be considered innocent. Innocent then is he who forswears politics, who takes no part in public movements of the time, who retires into his house and mumbles his prayers, pays his taxes and *salam*s the Government officials all round. The man who interferes in politics, the man who goes about collecting money for any public purpose, the man who addresses a public meeting, then becomes a suspect. I am always on the borderline and I, therefore, for personal reasons, if for nothing else, undertake to say that the possession in the hands of the executive of powers of this drastic nature will not hurt only the wicked but it will hurt the good as well as the bad and there will be such a lowering of public spirit, and of political comment in the country, that all your talk of Responsible Government will be a mere mockery. We are all anxious to punish the wicked, but even the wicked must be punished in certain ways. Now, even in war, when all humanity throbs with excitement and peril and when nobody thinks of anything except how to conquer the enemy, even then, there are laws of war, if you have to play the game.

This repressive measure had no public support and in warning the Government against carrying the measure through, in the teeth of the opposition of Indians, Sastri put the pertinent question to Government: "Whom have you behind you now amongst the Indians? The tragic story of India may be summed up in these words, that you have governed all these centuries in India in isolation, without having any responsible section of public opinion behind you." Sastri closed his speech with the following solemn warning:

Now there is only one more remark I must make and it is that injustice is done to the feeling in the country of which for the moment I am the spokesman. I venture to think that no one here who has spoken against the Bill indulged in anything which might truthfully be described as a threat of agitation. None of us, certainly none of the Moderates, I take leave to say, has power to go and stir up a violent agitation in the country. It is impossible. Agitation must be there already. The heart must be throbbing if any word that we can use here can have a possible effect on the general political atmosphere. The agitation is there. I wish to assure my official colleagues that none of us has had a share yet in this business. But, if our appeals fall flat, if the Act goes through, I do not believe there is anyone here who would be doing his duty if he did not join the agitation.

No heed was paid to this speech proceeding from a person who was known for his moderate views and who was

accustomed to weigh his words and, in spite of the passionate protest of Sastri and other leaders, the motion that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee was carried and even the amendment, that its consideration be deferred till six months after the term of office of the Legislative Assembly, was defeated on 6 February 1919; 22 voted for the amendment and 34 against. In the list of those who voted for the amendment are to be found the names of eminent Indians who have left their mark on the affairs of the country. The Bill was finally passed on 18 March 1919 with some modifications, which were not of much consequence. As a protest against this unpopular measure, Malaviya, Mazharul Huq and Jinnah thought it necessary to resign their membership of the Council.

The whole country was convulsed with strong agitation against the Bills. In Bombay several public meetings were held. For instance, on 3 February 1919, under the auspices of the Home Rule League, a public meeting was held for the purpose of protesting against the introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Criminal Emergency Powers Bill (The Rowlatt Bills). Malaviya presided. Messages were read at the meeting including one from Gandhi expressing sympathy with the object of the meeting. I then proposed the following resolution:

That this meeting emphatically protests against the introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill, by the provisions of which it is proposed to arm the Government and its executive officers with novel and even unheard-of powers of the most dangerous description, striking at the root of the liberties of the people and involving an unwarrantable and unnecessary interference with their fundamental rights. Some of the provisions of the proposed Bills represent a departure from sound principles relating to evidence and procedure in the administration of criminal justice, which are essential for the ascertainment of the proof of guilt and for the protection and safeguarding of the innocent. This meeting is strongly of opinion that if legislation of such a retrograde and repressive character is passed, the effect on the public mind and the relations between the Government and the people will be most disastrous.

The resolution was seconded by K. M. Munshi, supported by Jamnadas Dwarkadas and by other speakers and was passed with acclamation.

The meeting then passed a resolution appointing a Committee consisting of Jinnah, Jayakar, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Horniman, C. V. Vaidya, Umar Sobhani and others, to organise and carry on a most vigorous constitutional agitation to prevent the enactment of these measures and to take steps necessary to test the competence of the Indian Legislature to pass such measures.

The public was not satisfied with one meeting and the feeling of discontent was so deep that another meeting had to be held on 14 February 1919, again under the auspices of the Home Rule League. I presided and Mrs. Besant delivered a strong protest against the measures.

The very next day Mrs. Besant wrote in the *Bombay Chronicle* a detailed and well-considered article entitled "Stand up Parantapa" (another name for Arjuna). She quoted extensively from the Bhagwatgita, pointing out the obvious duty of public leaders to oppose the measure in the spirit of the Gita, to "fight for the fight's sake without counting for results".

On 11 April 1919 news reached Bombay that Gandhi had been arrested at Palwal on his way to Delhi. The news of this event brought matters to a head and at a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held in Bombay on 20 and 21 April 1919, a "Committee was appointed consisting of the following persons—

1. The President, The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya,
2. Mr. M. A. Jinnah,
3. Mr. M. R. Jayakar,
4. Mr. R. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar,
5. The Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru, and
6. The Hon'ble V. J. Patel

to prepare a statement—

(a) replying to the communique issued by the Government of India dated the 14th instant in which they justified the Rowlatt Act, condemned the agitation against it and characterised it as calculated to mislead people;

(b) stating the various causes that have led up to the present grave and deplorable state of things all over the country; and

(c) making a demand for a public inquiry into the events that have happened in Delhi, the Punjab, Bombay and Calcutta, drawing particular attention to certain measures reported to have been taken by the Executive, which seem obviously objectionable, such as the dropping of bombs from aeroplanes, use of machine guns and whipping, and submit it to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for India, the Under-Secretary of State and the Viceroy."

The Committee accordingly prepared the following statement and cabled it to the parties mentioned above in England, including Lord Sinha, the then Under-Secretary of State for India.

All-India Congress Committee desire most earnestly to represent to His Majesty's Government intense gravity of present situation in India, real causes and need for change of policy pursued at present. While deploring and condemning popular excesses which have occurred in some parts of country, and which popular leaders have everywhere used their influence not unsuccessfully to restrain, Committee urge impartial consideration of circumstances which have so aggravated and embittered feelings of people throughout country as to make such outbreaks possible. Resolution of the Government of India dated 14th instant describing present situation as arising out of Rowlatt Act agitation makes only partial statement of case. Undoubtedly intense universal bitterness of opposition to Rowlatt Act forced through Legislature by official votes against unanimous protest of all non-official Indian members and in face of unparalleled opposition throughout country was immediate cause of recent popular peaceful demonstrations but subsequent excesses were provoked by needless and unjustifiable action of Government of India and Punjab and Delhi Governments against so revered a personality as that of Mr. Gandhi and against other popular leaders. For complete understanding however of present discontent and its causes, other important factors must be considered.

Subsequently, on 14 October 1919, the Government of India issued a Resolution to the effect that the Governor-General-in-Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State, had decided to appoint a Committee to investigate the recent disturbances in Bombay, Delhi and the Punjab, their causes and the measures taken to cope with them.

The Committee consisted of the following members: Lord Hunter, earlier Solicitor General in Scotland, and then Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, President;

Justice Rankin of the Calcutta High Court; other European Members; and Chimanlal Setalvad; Jagat Narainlal, Member of the U. P. Legislative Council, and Sultan Ahmedkhan, Member for Appeals, Gwalior—the Indian members.

The Committee held its first sitting at Delhi on 29 October. Then it worked at Ahmedabad and in Bombay and adjourned to Agra to draft its Report. At some of the sittings at Delhi and in Ahmedabad, the Congress took part in the proceedings; but, later, it held aloof from them under the circumstances described below.

At Lahore, on 12 November 1919, a communication was received by the Hunter Committee from the President of the All-India Congress Committee, forwarding a copy of the resolution passed by that body that, "in view of the situation created by the refusal of the Government to accede to the request for the temporary release, on adequate security, of the principal Punjab leaders at present undergoing imprisonment, the [Congress] Committee regrets that it finds it impossible to co-operate with the Disorders Enquiry Committee by appearing before it and tendering evidence on behalf of the people." It was further suggested in the letter that the impasse could only be ended if the Hunter Committee could see their way to recommend the release, for the period of the enquiry, of the principal leaders.

The Hunter Committee, however, could not see their way to grant this request, though they offered to give proper facilities for consultation between persons in custody and the counsel engaged in the enquiry. This concession, however, was not found satisfactory by the Congress, with the result that at the later sittings the Congress did not participate.

After the conclusion of the enquiry, the Committee assembled at Agra to draft their report. After many discussions among themselves, it became apparent that there was a definite cleavage of opinion between the European members on the one hand and the Indian members on the other on nearly all important matters. As Setalvad records in his autobiography (p. 311), the discussions were on many occasions heated, up to the extent of unpleasantness, particularly because of the intolerant attitude adopted by Lord Hunter towards any difference of opinion. On one occasion, Setalvad recalls, the differences reached such a crisis that, though living under the same roof, the Indian members stopped

talking to Lord Hunter. Lord Hunter drafted the report to which the European members agreed. The Indian members wrote a separate report which, it was understood, was drafted by Setalvad. The subsequent treatment of this report in the British Parliament will be mentioned in this narrative at the right place.

The Congress had anticipated such differences, so, on 14 November 1919, the Punjab Sub-Committee of the All-India Congress Committee appointed a separate committee of its own, consisting of Motilal Nehru, Fazlul Huq, C. R. Das, Abbas Tyabji, and Gandhi as Commissioners, with K. Santanam as Secretary, "to examine, sift, collate and analyse the evidence already collected by and on behalf of the Sub-Committee regarding the events of last April in the Punjab and to supplement such evidence where necessary and to present their conclusions thereon." Motilal Nehru ceased to be the President of this Committee on his election to the Presidency of the then ensuing Session of the Indian National Congress at Amritsar. Fazlul Huq was called away at an early date and thereupon I was appointed to take his place. We entered upon our work in the Punjab on 17 November 1919.

The interesting story of how my contact with this Committee arose and how it developed into life-long friendship with Gandhi and the other members of the Committee, will be revealed in the next chapter.

TO RESUME the narrative of the Rowlatt Act, not many words of condemnation are necessary. The Act set aside all the requirements of fairness and justice which are usually observed in civilized countries. It provided, among other things, for a speedy trial of certain offences, a list of which was scheduled. Infinite power was placed in the hands of the police and the executive and under the provisions of the Act even an energetic criticism of a Government measure, a religious riot, a Hindu-Muslim quarrel, might all come to be recognised as having connection with a revolutionary movement once a suspicion gained ground in the official mind that such a movement was in existence. As for the speedy trials enforced by the Act, they were to be conducted expeditiously without commitment, with no right of appeal.

Some parts of the measure were of an even more objectionable character. The person charged under its provisions was not allowed to be represented by a pleader. The authority charged with the responsibility of enforcing this Act was not to disclose to the person concerned any fact, the communication of which might endanger the public safety or the safety of an individual. He was compelled to submit to a trial without the protection of a single one of the safeguards which civilized countries adopt for his protection and, in making the enquiry, the authority, acting under the Act, was not bound by any provisions of the law of evidence.

As was expected, this Act raised a storm of opposition unknown before in India. A typical description of this Act, which the public mind thought fit to employ was, "*Na appeal, na dalil, na vakil*", meaning, No appeal, no argument, no pleader. As the Congress Committee observed later, "if this is the worst description of the Act on the popular side, it far under-rates its evil rather than over-rates it. In our opinion, no self-respecting persons can tolerate what is an outrage upon society. The crime of the Government became complete when they persisted in it in the face of unanimous popular opinion. We would note too that the Viceroy had sufficient powers by means of Ordinances to deal with extraordinary situations. The Government were wholly unjustified in placing on the Statute Book, on the eve of liberal reforms, an extraordinary measure to deal with anarchy as if anarchy has been endemic instead of being rare in India."

One of the earliest results of this measure was that on 6 April 1919 there was a general hartal in India as a protest against this measure. It was absolutely non-violent and led to no breaches of the public peace. Notwithstanding this, however, on 7 April 1919, Sir Michael O'Dwyer made a speech which was unrivalled in the provocation it offered to Indian sentiment. Even a brief outline of that speech is beyond the dimensions of this chapter, but an extract might be permitted to show its provocative character. He said:

The Government of this Province is and will remain determined that public order shall not be disturbed in the time of peace. The British Government, which has crushed foreign foes and quelled internal rebellion, could afford to despise these agitators, but it has a duty of protection to the young and ignorant, whom they may incite to mischief and crime while themselves standing aside.

He then poured ridicule upon the public leaders of India and treated with contempt their desire and attempt to obtain reforms. There was general appreciation of the peaceful nature of the hartal of 6 April but Sir Michael's one desire was to provide what he called a day of reckoning for those who he thought were appealing to passion or ignorance rather than to reason. But curiously enough his own speech bristled with passages in which he appealed to passion and ignorance rather than to reason, constantly referring to what he called the day of reckoning.

But in spite of this speech and the consequent provocation, everything was quiet in the Punjab up to 9 April. On that day occurred an unfortunate incident which disturbed the previous non-violent attitude of the people. That incident was regrettable, as the Congress Committee admitted in their Report, but it served to give an occasion to Michael O'Dwyer's administration to increase the rigour and lawlessness of the "day of reckoning".

That day was the Ram Navami day, the birth anniversary of Shree Ram. The leaders had decided that there should be complete fraternisation between Hindus and Muslims on that occasion. Though Ram Navami is a Hindu religious festival, Muslims decided to take part in it. It consequently assumed great significance. There was a big procession in which a number of Muslims took part. The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar watched this procession and as the various brass bands in the procession passed him, the evidence showed that they loyally struck up "God Save the King" and that, in spite of the largeness of the demonstration, there was no regrettable incident disturbing public peace.

But this peaceful demonstration and the display of national unity only exasperated Sir Michael O'Dwyer and he passed orders to deport two popular leaders—Kitchlew and Satyapal. These orders added fuel to the fire. A crowd immediately gathered, bare-headed in token of mourning, but without sticks. The crowd was on its way to the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow to pray for the release of these beloved leaders. When it reached the Railway over-bridge it demanded passage to the Deputy Commissioner's residence to make the said request. But British pickets opposed the crowd. Ignoring this obstacle, however, the crowd advanced. The Military on duty immediately fired, killing and wounding some

members of the crowd, whereupon the crowd fell back.

It was now no longer a peaceful crowd, but a crowd foiled in its efforts to secure the release of their leaders and exasperated at the killing and wounding of its members. The enraged men proceeded to the Railway foot-bridge and the bazar, carrying the killed and the wounded, the sight of whom inflamed feelings beyond control. Within a short time, a large crowd again gathered near the bridge, but this time it had armed itself with sticks and pieces of wood.

Leaders tried to reason with the crowd and pacify it. It looked, at one time, as if they would succeed, but some persons in the crowd threw sticks and pieces of wood at the Military, who instantly fired, killing about twenty persons and wounding many more. The leaders removed the dead and attended to the wounded, but the infuriated men attacked several public buildings including the Alliance Bank. A British girl, going on a cycle, was attacked, but fortunately, she was rescued by the father of one of her Indian pupils. The crowd contained the usual hooligan element, which seeing the opportunity, resorted to looting. Evidence proved, however, that among the persons apprehended for this offence, there were some policemen.

The Congress Committee held in its Report that the provocation given by the deportation of the beloved leaders of the people was grave and uncalled for. This was doubled when an unarmed crowd was prevented from proceeding on its peaceful errand to approach the Deputy Commissioner and which, upon becoming insistent, was fired at. It is important to note that up to the time of reaching the over-bridge and the subsequent firing, the unarmed mob had committed no violence. All the evidence which was led severally before the Martial Law Commission, Lord Hunter's Committee and the Congress Committee, proved that there was no warrant for the firing, that the authorities omitted all the prior stages that are usually resorted to in all civilized countries. There was, for instance, no parleying or use of milder force. Immediately the crowd became insistent, the order to fire was given. On this the Congress Committee went on to observe that "in this country it has become too much the custom with the executive and the military never to run any risk, or to put it in another way, to count Indian life very cheap."

But Michael O'Dwyer used this incident to vent his resentment, but, in doing so, he galvanized the Punjab into life and made the Punjabis feel akin in a manner they had never done before. In the beginning of April, he had an ocular demonstration of the oneness of the Punjab and of the oneness of India indicated by the peaceful general hartal of the 6th of April, and by the later intermingling of Hindus and Muslims at the Ram Navami festival. He was enraged by this unity and wanted to and did make a supreme effort to crush the spirit that was struggling to be free from the thralldom under which he had bound it during his iron rule. He scented danger in every honest speech made by the leaders and he detected conspiracy in every combination; thus forgetting himself, he issued orders against Satyapal, Kitchlew and even Gandhi. He must have known that this could only end in exasperating the people who had already been antagonised against his rule. "We feel tempted to say," the Congress Committee observed, "that he invited violence from the people so that he could crush them. He subjected the Punjabis to the gravest provocation under which they momentarily lost self-control." "They have," as the Committee said, "paid dearly for it, but they have also with amazing quickness regained control and risen purified through the fire of suffering mostly undeserved."

What is Jallianwala Bagh, the word which has acquired such sinister significance in Indian history? Though called Bagh (a garden), it was at that time an open piece of waste land surrounded by houses. It was private property owned in common by several people. It was a quadrangle indifferently walled in most places. The backs of the houses surrounding it enclosed the quadrangular space. The main entrance was a narrow passage. There were no other regular entrances, but at four or five points it was possible to get out through narrow openings. The ground at the entrance was an elevation remarkably fit for posting soldiers and firing upon a crowd in front. When, therefore, General Dyer marched into the Bagh, as stated below, with ninety soldiers, the crowd had no easy exit.

On 13 April, a meeting was being held in the afternoon near the centre of this quadrangle. About 20,000 people had met there. An aeroplane was hovering over the meeting before the arrival of General Dyer's troops. There was an

improvised platform round which the audience had gathered. It included many boys and children and some men and women had come with infants in their arms. The people were unarmed and had not even lathis with them. The meeting was announced in the morning by beating a tin can. The announcement had been made some time before General Dyer's proclamation against holding the meeting was made known to the public. In the light of the previous occurrence, the people were led to think that at the meeting some sound advice on the situation then existing would be given.

At about 12-45 p.m. General Dyer was informed that a big meeting was to be held at the Bagh at 4-30 that very afternoon. As he admitted before the Hunter Committee, he took no steps to prevent the meeting. When asked by Lord Hunter why he did not take measures to prevent the crowd from assembling, his reply was, "I had no time and I thought I had done enough in warning them not to meet." "I did not believe," he said, "that they would really meet after the warning given in the morning." He did not think it necessary to give another warning. He had got definite information at 4 o'clock that the meeting was actually being held. Soon after, he marched towards the city with picketing parties consisting of 25 rifles of Gurkhas and 20 Sikhs. He also had 40 more Gurkhas armed with kukris. He took two armoured cars with him. When asked why he did not hurry up so as to be in time to prevent the meeting being held or to disperse it early, his reply was, "It was very hot and we went at the usual pace of marching." He reached the Bagh at about a quarter past five. He disposed his soldiers at vantage points. Fortunately, the two armoured cars which he took with him could not enter the Bagh because the entrance was too narrow.

It is best to describe what happened by reproducing a brief summary of Dyer's evidence before the Hunter Committee. When he got into the Bagh he opened fire at once. He had thought over the matter and he took not more than thirty seconds to make up his mind as to what his duty was. The crowd was then holding a meeting. Someone was addressing it. His troops were drawn up about 50 or 60 yards away. He admitted that there might have been a good many who had not heard of his warning proclamation in the morning. It did not occur to him that it would be proper to ask

the crowd to disperse before he started firing. He merely felt that his orders had not been obeyed, that Martial Law (which had not been intended at that date) had been flouted, that it was his duty to fire immediately. He admitted that, before he took action, some of the audience had started to run away and that, when he began to fire, the big mob began to run almost towards the exits. Though Martial Law had not been proclaimed, he did not think it necessary to consult the Deputy Commissioner, who was the civil authority. He had to make up his mind immediately as to what action he should take. He considered the question from the military point of view that he had to fire immediately and that, if he did not do so, he would fail in his duty.

LORD HUNTER: In firing, was it your object to disperse the crowd?

GEN. DYER: No Sir, I was going to fire until they dispersed.

LORD HUNTER: Did the crowd at once start to disperse as soon as you fired?

GEN. DYER: Immediately.

LORD HUNTER: Did you continue firing?

GEN. DYER: Yes.

LORD HUNTER: After the crowd indicated that it was going to disperse, why did you not stop?

GEN. DYER: I thought it was my duty to go on until it dispersed. If I fired a little, I should be wrong in firing at all.

He continued to fire for about ten minutes. He had no military experience of methods of dispersing crowds. He could have dispersed them perhaps even without firing, but he fired because they would have all come back and laughed at him and he would have made a fool of himself. His reasons for firing, he stated frankly, were that he thought the situation was a widespread military situation not confined to Amritsar. He fired 1,650 rounds of ammunition. He would have taken the armoured cars into the Bagh and opened fire with them, but they could not enter. He stopped short only because the ammunition had run out. The crowd was very dense. He had made no provision for aiding or removing the wounded. It was not his duty to render aid. That was a medical question and as soon as the firing ceased, he left the place. He checked his firing and directed it upon places where the crowd was the thickest and this he did, not because they were not going away fast, but because he had made up his mind to punish

them for having assembled.

Evidence was led before the Congress Committee of inquiry through the mouths of important Indian witnesses, some of whom happened to watch the scene from a house overlooking the Bagh, that hundreds of persons were killed on the spot. The worst part of the whole affair was that firing was directed towards the gates through which the people were running out. Many got trampled under foot and thus lost their lives. Blood was pouring in profusion. Even those who lay flat on the ground were shot. No arrangements were made by the authorities to look after the dead or wounded. A witness, who had visited the spot later, gave water to the wounded and rendered such assistance as was possible. He went round the whole place and saw almost everybody lying there. There were heaps of them at different places. The dead bodies were of grown-up people, and young boys also. The witness thought there must have been one thousand dead bodies in the garden then. He saw people hurrying away and many had to leave their dead and wounded because they were afraid of being fired upon again. Many amongst the wounded who managed to run from the Bagh succumbed to their injuries on the way and lay dead in the streets.

As for the number of people who were killed on the occasion, the exact figure will never be known, as Government did not announce the figure until 20 August, that is four months after the tragedy, but on a careful consideration of the entire evidence of the Indian witnesses, the figure of 1000 was by no means an exaggerated calculation. It must be remembered that the firing was directed even into the narrow lanes forming the exits, that soldiers were posted at points outside the Bagh to guard these exits and many were shot whilst they were attempting to effect their escape through them. The Congress Committee's conclusion stated in their words was: "There can be no doubt that General Dyer's plan was to kill the largest number and if the number was one thousand and not more, the fault was not his. His ammunition was exhausted and he could not take his armoured cars through the passage, it being too narrow."

It is not possible to describe adequately the hideous details of the events of the 13th, and its "frightfulness", to use Justice Rankin's expression (he was a member of the Hunter Committee). As the Congress Committee observed, "In order

to appreciate the tragedy fully one must read the whole of the official evidence and the evidence published by us. After the violence of the 10th of April, the English officials had become angry and their temper was excited. It was even suggested at one time that the whole town of Amritsar should be, as a punishment, bombarded, but the authorities were warned that in doing so if any part of the Golden Temple of the Sikhs was damaged, there would be no end of trouble as this temple was held sacred all over the Punjab.

This will explain why and how the frightfulness of 13 April came about, followed by Gandhi's arrest on his way to Delhi on the very next day. A staggering blow had to be delivered. The evidence proved that even the people who had heard the morning proclamation of General Dyer might not have understood the significance or the meaning of the prohibitory part of it. Not a single man went to the meeting to defy that proclamation. No provocation was given to the military authorities and nothing either in Amritsar or outside justified the massacre. The Congress Committee observed: "It was a calculated act of inhumanity and if British rule in India is to be purged of this inexcusable wrong, General Dyer must be relieved of his command and brought to justice." General Dyer declared before the Hunter Committee that Sir Michael O'Dwyer approved of his action. "It is unthinkable to us," the Congress Committee observed, "that one who was a trustee for the inhabitants of the Punjab should have endorsed a crime against humanity. Even under Martial Law, *de facto* or *de jure*, certain canons of decency are obligatory on commanding officers. General Dyer totally disregarded them. There might have been some acts of violence affecting Englishmen and they were indefensible, but no deeds however dastardly of an enraged mob could warrant a slaughter of innocent people such as General Dyer was guilty of."

The 14th of April was devoted by the people to rendering aid to the wounded and to clearing the dead and burning or burying them. Official permission had to be obtained and a laconic proclamation was issued: "Inhabitants may burn or bury their dead persons as soon as they please. There should be no demonstration of any kind." General Dyer, however, continued his provocation even on the next day. In the evening, he rushed into his office-room, followed by other European officials, all exceedingly angry, and made a speech

in Urdu. Some of his remarks are worth quoting even at this distance of time. "I am a sepoy and a soldier. Do you want war or peace? If you wish for war, the Government is prepared for it and if you want peace then obey my orders, else I will shoot. For me the battlefield of France or Amritsar is the same. I am a military man and I will go straight. You people talk against the Government and persons educated in Germany and Bengal talk sedition. I shall deport all these. Obey orders. I do not wish to have anything else. I have served in the Military for over thirty years. You must inform me of the *badmashis*. I will shoot them." The General was followed by the Deputy Commissioner. Two sentences from his speech might be enough: "You have committed a bad act in killing the English. Revenge will be taken upon you and your children."

On 15 April all the shops were opened. One would have thought that with the retribution of the 13th, the speeches of the 14th and the opening of the shops on the 15th, ordinary civil rule would be resumed, but it was not to be. Martial Law was proclaimed and what was true in fact "became a fact in law". It remained in force up to 9 June and the life of the people in Amritsar was made intolerable in a variety of ways.

It is not possible in the short space of this chapter to mention all the odious steps adopted by Michael O'Dwyer and his officials to humiliate the people; but two of them have been selected for special mention here as typical of the dastardly shamelessness and cruelty of the procedure. The street in which the Englishwoman was assaulted was set apart for flogging people and for making those who passed through it crawl on their bellies. This was what became notorious as "the crawling order". The hideous details relating to this, some of which deserve recall, I shall nevertheless omit. They are too heartless and debasing to be recalled at this distance of time. Although General Dyer called the crawling going on all fours, the process consisted in the persons lying flat on their bellies and crawling exactly like reptiles. The whole motion, therefore, had to be performed by the movement of the belly and the arms.

General Dyer's explanation for this demoniacal order was as follows:

I felt women had been beaten. We look upon women as sacred. I searched in my brain for a suitable punishment. I did not know how to meet the case. There was a little bit of an accident in that. When I visited the pickets I went down and ordered a triangle erected (Tik Tiki). I felt the street ought to be looked upon as sacred. Therefore, I posted the pickets at both ends and told them that no Indians were to be allowed to pass along here. I also said if they had to pass, they must go on all fours.

Dyer believed that no sensible or sane man would, under the circumstances, voluntarily go through that street, but had to admit that within a few minutes after he had placed the pickets, twelve persons arrested for being insolent were compelled to crawl between the two pickets, a distance of about 150 yards. The Congress Committee observed, "the deliberateness of the punishment cannot well be surpassed. The assault on the Englishwoman was on the 10th and the order was promulgated on the 19th. It had to be obeyed by those who might never have seen the Englishwoman. The vast majority of the residents of Amritsar must have deplored the cowardly assault on her but the punishment was extended to others who were not guilty of the assault." "It is difficult," further observed the Congress Committee, "to characterize the mind that invents and takes pleasure in inflicting a punishment whose object is merely to degrade man's state." The pickets were posted from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. So, when Lord Hunter asked General Dyer what justification there was for passing an order which necessitated the inhabitants lawfully residing in the area to crawl on all fours when they had to leave the house, he replied that they could leave it at all other times, that is between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. He forgot, however, that another order operated against this; because nobody could be out after 10 p.m. and if he was, he was liable to be shot. Yet he said in answer to Lord Hunter: "I do not think it caused very great inconvenience. If they had suffered a little, it would be no harm under Martial Law. They could get the necessaries of life by other means. It could not be helped if they had to suffer a slight amount of inconvenience." He admitted to Lord Hunter that there might have been some law-abiding citizens affected by this order, but he added that on that occasion he only thought of punishing the wicked.

General Dyer in the course of his evidence mentioned that

he had erected a platform in the middle of the street and meant to thrash the men who had beaten the Englishwoman. It was pointed out to him that that was not the street which was frequented by those who had assaulted the Englishwoman. He gave no reply to this. This platform was erected and was used for the purpose of flogging all and sundry, irrespective of their guilt or otherwise. The flogging was in public and was not only humiliating but was a torture and it is difficult to understand why flogging was administered at all. The evidence laid before the Hunter Committee showed that it was administered for so-called breaches of Fort discipline and on those who were suspected of assaulting the Englishwoman, but in actual practice the evidence showed that six boys were flogged on the booth, none of whom by any stretch of argument could have been suspected of assaulting the Englishwoman. Each of them was fastened to the triangle and given thirty stripes. One of them, a small boy, became senseless after the fourth stripe but after some water was poured into his mouth he regained consciousness. Flogging was then resumed. He lost consciousness for a second time, but the flogging was not stopped till he was given thirty stripes. He was taken off the flogging post bleeding and quite unconscious. Other boys were similarly treated. The majority of them became unconscious while they were being flogged. They were all handcuffed and as they could not walk a few paces they were dragged by the police and taken to the Fort.

The punishment did not, however, stop there. Popular leaders amongst the public, who were charged on the alleged ground of their having taken part in the agitation in the Hartal and even for having supported common eating houses, were flogged on the alleged ground that their acts amounted to "waging war". The highest number of stripes was thirty, the lowest five. Lord Hunter asked General Dyer whether he ever imagined that the punishment had a serious effect. The answer was, "I cannot imagine it." In his opinion it was the "kindest method of punishment". To Justice Rankin he said he (Dyer) "terrorised people and dozens and dozens of sentences were saved by the flogging." Justice Rankin thought that it was a little strong to suggest that whipping could be regarded as the most efficacious and convenient method of summarily dealing with masses of people. He asked one of the Punjab officials whether flogging should not be rather

exceptional. The answer was, "I hardly agree with you. We have a very great population, and we are creating new offences. If the jail is the only punishment it would not affect the population here very much. The jail is an extraordinarily comfortable place from the general standard of household at Lahore. They are well-fed in the central jail and one would soon have got used to the conditions. I feared the jails would be filled. The value of whipping is equal to one thousand soldiers in keeping peace."

During the trials at Kasur (a Punjab town), forty men were sentenced to be whipped. The total number of stripes given was 710. The flogging post was erected on the station platform. Schoolboys were also punished with flogging. The headmaster was asked to produce these boys. He did so. He was asked to select six boys. Apparently without any reference to the offence, he selected those who were not quite high class but who were not physically fit. The Commanding Officer rejected these boys and asked another European official to select others and so a selection was made out of the boys for no other reason than that they were bodily better fitted for the punishment than the others. They were whipped outside the station entrance and in the presence of the other schoolboys. In answer to a question by Lord Hunter as to what the object was, the reply given by the Punjab official was that there was no particular object. They had not committed any martial law offence. There was no investigation, no trial. It was a wanton use of authority.

It may be kept in mind that the charge of waging war against the Government against these little boys was ridiculous. Even older men who were flogged on that account could not have been engaged in "waging war", a term which was then frequently used. It was a prostitution of the term to apply it to the state of things that existed in the Punjab, and, with reference to this, the Congress Committee observed: "We have read all the evidence produced before Lord Hunter and we have been unable to notice a single fact or argument in support of the statement that Punjab was waging war against the King." Violating the Curfew Order, however unknowingly or reasonably, was included in the expression, "waging war", and the offenders were publicly whipped like common and incorrigible criminals. It is remarkable that the judges who tried these men required no evidence of the state of war in

the Punjab but took judicial notice of it because of the proclamation establishing Martial Law. It is not surprising, therefore, that the theory of "waging war" completely broke down before Lord Hunter's Committee.

Other forms of humiliating punishment may be briefly mentioned because they are not so gruesome. Lawyers were the special victims of punishment and a typical case was that of Manohar Lal who later became a respected member of the Government in the Punjab and whose academic career was well-known in India. He was a Foundation Scholar of St. John's College, Cambridge and possessed several other distinctions. He was then the Vice-President of the High Court Bar Association and the President of the Forman College Graduates' Association. He was arrested as a Trustee of a popular paper called *Tribune*. There was no warrant, nor was he made aware of the charge on which he was arrested. He had only two minutes to take leave of his wife and children. He was removed by the Police and kept in custody for more than two days. Up to the last he did not know what he had been accused of. Within three-quarters of an hour after his arrest his invalid wife and children were compulsorily removed from his house, which was searched, and they had to find shelter in the servants' quarters in the compound.

A resourceful officer invented another form of humiliating punishment, namely to paste notices on the houses of those whom he considered to be "evilly disposed" persons. The owner was made responsible for any damage done, even including the dirtying of these notices. By "evilly disposed persons", the officer meant those whom he suspected, or who were not known for their notorious loyalty. Great violence was done to the student world as well as to the professors of colleges who became the subject of the special dislike of the authorities. Educational institutions were selected for this punishment and the greater their popularity the greater was the cruelty. The Sanatan Dharma College happened to attract attention and a notice was stuck on the outside wall of this college. It was torn down by someone not connected with the college. As a punishment for this, all the students of the hostel of the college were arrested, including every male found on the premises. Five hundred students were arrested and the professors also. They were marched to the Fort

three miles away from the college. They were ordered, during the march, to carry their bedding on their shoulders or heads. This was on a Lahore summer day in the month of May. They were kept in the Fort for two days. Chimanlal Setalvad, a Member of the Hunter Committee, asked Dyer after a long and severe cross-examination:

Question: I put it to you, do you think that the measure you took was a reasonable one?

Answer: Yes. I was looking for it. I was looking just for an opportunity.

Question: You considered then and you consider it now a reasonable order to make?

Answer: Undoubtedly. I was waiting for an opportunity to bring home to the people the power of Martial Law.

Question: You were longing for an opportunity to show the might of Martial Law?

Answer: Quite. I got the opportunity and I took it.

Question: You still maintain that it was a proper exercise of your authority?

Answer: Absolutely. I will do it again tomorrow if circumstances required.

Dyer was asked whether it ever occurred to him that it was working upon the students the utmost hardship to make them travel sixteen miles every day in the Lahore sun for three weeks to salute the Union Jack. He answered, "No hardship at all." He was again asked whether it occurred to him as to how many hundreds and thousands of students were filled with bitter hatred towards the British Government for the rest of their lives.

Answer: Nothing that he did could make them worse.

Question: Were you meeting the situation by this punishment?

Answer: I was not out to make them loyal but to keep them out of mischief. I thought that that was the best way.

It is not possible to describe in this chapter several other methods of humiliating cruelty. They are too inhuman and debasing. But a British officer conceived the novel idea of treating and punishing it as sedition if more than two Indians walked abreast. The preamble of the notice which he issued in this behalf is worth quoting: "Whereas it was expedient to prevent violence or intimidation, if more than two natives come and do not give way to a European, that is likely to

lead to a breach of the peace." He admitted that the breach of the peace would be committed by the Europeans and not by the "natives". Indians had to suffer in order to prevent the breach on the part of Europeans who might resent more than two Indians walking abreast. In justification, this officer said he wanted to bring home to the people that they could not play this game. He admitted further that a marriage party in Lahore was arrested because they were more than ten people in it and they were moving about as a marriage party. The bridegroom was detained. The priest and the others were flogged. Later, by the intervention of the higher authorities the fines were remitted but the flogging was carried out.

The whole atmosphere became ultimately so brutalising that High Court judges, who ordinarily would respect judicial forms and give scrupulous hearing to the accused and to their counsel, brushed aside all canons of justice and fairness and rendered themselves unfit as judges even though dealing with matters of life and death. Villagers were bombed and poor, innocent people killed and machine-gun fire was levelled against them because they were running back to their village in the course of dispersing. When the first bomb was dropped they began to run away into the village. Some shots were then directed at their houses and machine-gun fire was opened on the village. The official who did this was asked whether his object was to hit and kill more people although they had begun to disperse and were running away after the bombs were dropped. The answer was: "I was trying to do it in their own interest. I realised that if I tried to kill the people they would not gather again and do damage."

The humiliation perhaps reached its peak when a Martial Law notice stated:

"We have come to know that the inhabitants in the Gujranwala District do not usually show respect to the gazetted Commissioners, European Civil and Military officers. By this the prestige and honour of the Government is not maintained. Therefore, we order that the inhabitants of the Gujranwala District should show proper respect to these respectable officers, whenever they have occasion to meet them. Whenever anyone is on horseback or is driving in any kind of wheeled conveyance, he must get down. One who has opened or got an umbrella in his hand should close or lower it down and all these persons should salute with their right hand respectfully."

Women did not escape humiliating punishment but I shall omit all details as they are too brutalizing to be recorded here.

On a review of the facts mentioned above and some others which I am deliberately omitting, the Congress Committee of inquiry came to certain conclusions stated with great restraint, some of which are set out below:

The people of the Punjab were in a sense against Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration by reason of his studied contempt and distrust of the educated classes and by reason of the cruel and compulsory method adopted during the war. The public mind was further disturbed by the Rowlatt Act agitation, which shook public confidence in the goodwill of the Government. Popular agitation against the Rowlatt Act was not conceived in an anti-British spirit, but was conducted in a spirit entirely free from ill-will and violence. There was no conspiracy to overthrow the Government. The arrest and internment of Mr. Gandhi, the arrest and deportation of Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, were unjustifiable and were the direct cause of hysterical popular excitement.

Several acts of the Punjab officials like, for instance, firing at the Railway bridge, raised the excitement to white heat. But, whatever the cause of the provocation, the mob excesses, which the Committee condemn, were due only to a temporary loss of balance and soon quiet was restored and the public mind became balanced. There was no cause justifying the introduction of Martial Law, which was declared after order had been completely restored. Many of the measures taken under the Martial Law in the whole of the Punjab were unnecessary, cruel, oppressive and in utter disregard to the feeling of the people affected by them. The Jallianwalla Bagh massacre was a calculated piece of inhumanity towards utterly innocent and unarmed men, including children, and unparalleled for its ferocity in the history of modern British administration. Martial Law Tribunals and Summary Courts, which were appointed in great panic, were made the means of harassing innocent people and resulted in abortion of justice on a wide scale, and, under the name of justice, caused moral and material suffering to hundreds of men and women. The crawling order and other fancy punishments were unworthy of a civilized administration and were symptoms of the moral degradation of their inventors.

After stating this in studied language, the Committee proceeded to mention certain measures for redressing the wrong done to the people, for the purification of the administration and for preventing the repetition in future of such official lawlessness. Amongst such measures, they suggested that Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Dyer, and all other British officials

who helped in this reign of lawlessness, should be relieved from any responsible office under the Crown, and the Viceroy should also be recalled.

The Committee then added a note, that, in its deliberate opinion, the officials concerned had been guilty of such illegality that they deserved to be impeached, but the Committee would purposely refrain from advising any such course, because the Committee believed that India could only gain by waiving this demand and that future purity would be sufficiently guaranteed by the dismissal of the officials concerned.

As will be shown in the next chapter, some members of the Congress Inquiry Committee were strongly of opinion that a recommendation should proceed from the Committee that the Viceroy should be impeached, as was done in the case of Warren Hastings, the Viceroy of India in those old times. But Gandhi's voice, anxious to avoid any appearance of vengeance, prevailed and the recommendation was omitted. The Committee contented itself with the following observation:

"We refrain from criticising his [the Viceroy's] attitude over the Rowlatt agitation. But a sense of public safety forbids us to ignore His Excellency's inability to appreciate and deal with the situation in April. Whilst, therefore, we do not think His Excellency was wilfully neglectful of the interests of those who were entrusted to his charge by His Majesty, we regret to say that His Excellency Lord Chelmsford proved himself incapable of holding the high office to which he was called, and we are of opinion that His Excellency should be recalled.

Public ferment in Bombay continued during all the period and protests were lodged at public meetings on different occasions, e.g. on 18 August 1919, under the auspices of the Bombay Branch of the Home Rule League, a very largely attended public meeting was held to protest against the severe sentences passed by the Martial Law Commissions in the Punjab and to urge upon the Government the immediate necessity of appointing an independent Commission to investigate into the grave situation and to collect funds for the alleviation of distress and to meet the cost of appeals to the Privy Council. I presided. In the course of my speech I demanded the impeachment of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and an Enquiry Committee to find out the illegalities of his Government. I also pointed out the humiliations heaped upon

the people, including the Punjab magnate, Harkisan Lal, and referred to the sentences of death passed upon persons irrespective of their young age. The agitation in Bombay reached its peak after the publication of the Report of the Hunter Committee.

On 20 June 1920, a public meeting was held to protest against the findings of the Hunter Committee. I seconded the main resolution and said that it was the deliberate intention of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and his officials to inflict on the Indian people untold humiliation, to strike a deadly blow at the rising aspirations and patriotism of the people of the Punjab, and to launch a cowardly attack on the honour and self-restraint of the literate classes.

Our work in the Punjab was provisionally finished in the last week of December and we all left for Amritsar to attend the ensuing session of the Congress there.

BEFORE I proceed to record the details of the Congress Session at Amritsar, it is necessary to mention an important event which occurred about two days before that session commenced and which largely coloured the proceedings of that session and especially Gandhi's attitude on the general political situation in the country.

This incident relates to the publication of a Royal Proclamation by His Majesty, the King of England, relating to the events in India and the future policy of the British Government relating to India.

A brief summary of the Royal Proclamation which was issued on 24 December 1919 is reproduced below. It had a great effect in softening the feelings aroused by the Punjab massacre and even Gandhi took the view that it was the opening of a new era and that, consequently, full response should be made by India to the generous sentiments contained in the Proclamation. It was an exceedingly well-worded document and had its desired effect on the political mind of India. Only a brief summary is possible in this narrative though the document deserves to be reproduced in full.

George the V, King Emperor of India, to My Viceroy and Governor-General, to the Princes of Indian States and to all My subjects in India of whatever race or creed, greetings. Another epoch has been

reached today in the annals of India. I have given My Royal assent to an Act which will take its place among the great historic measures passed by the Parliament of this Realm for the better Government of India and for the greater contentment of her people.

The document then proceeded to mention the several legislative measures relating to India bestowing upon the people increasing privileges commencing from the Act of 1773 and ending with the Act of 1909. It then proceeded to state:

The Act which has now become law entrusts the elected representatives of the people with a definite share in the Government and points the way to full Responsible Government hereafter. If, as I confidently hope, the policy which this Act inaugurates should achieve its purpose, the results will be momentous in the story of human progress and it is timely and fitting that I should invite you today to consider the past and to join Me in My hopes for the future.

Ever since the welfare of India was confided to us, it has been held as a sacred trust by our Royal House and Line.

The document then mentioned the several declarations made from time to time by Members of the Royal House of England, commencing from the year 1858 during the reign of Queen Victoria and ending with the message sent in the year 1910 on the King's accession to the Throne and with the visit paid by His Majesty to India along with the Queen. Reference was then made to the several measures in which the Parliament and the people of England had shown their zealously for the moral and material advancement of India. The proclamation then stated:

There is one gift which yet remains and without which the progress of a country cannot be consummated, the right of her people to direct her affairs and safeguard her interest.

The burden is too heavy to be borne in full until time and experience have brought the necessary strength; but opportunity will now be given for experience to grow and for responsibility to increase with the capacity for its fulfilment.

I have watched with understanding and sympathy the growing desire of My Indian people for representative institutions.

The Proclamation then proceeded to mention the small beginnings of this ambition and the steady increase in it from stage to stage, including India's output during the great war.

The desire after political responsibility has its source at the roots of the British connection with India. It has sprung inevitably from the deeper and wider studies of human thought and history which that connection has opened to the Indian people. The beginnings of representative institutions were laid many years ago. Their scope has been extended stage by stage until there now lies before us a definite step on the road to responsible government.

With the same sympathy and with redoubled interest, I shall watch the progress along this road. The path will not be easy and, in the march towards the goal, there will be need of perseverance and of mutual forbearance between all sections and races of My people in India. I am confident that these high qualities will be forthcoming.

The Proclamation then made an appeal to the people and the officials of Government to respect each other and to work in harmony and kindness, and called upon the officials to assist the people and their representatives in an orderly advance towards free institutions and to find, in these new tasks, a fresh opportunity to fulfil, as in the past, the highest purpose of faithful service to "My people".

The concluding paragraphs were regarded as perhaps the best part of the document.

It is My earnest desire at this time that, so far as possible, any trace of bitterness between My people and those who are responsible for My Government should be obliterated. Let those who in their eagerness for political progress have broken the law in the past, respect it in the future. A new era is opening. Let it begin with a common determination among My people. I, therefore, direct My Viceroy to exercise in My name and on My behalf, My Royal clemency to political offenders in the fullest measure which in his judgement is compatible with the public safety.

I trust that this leniency will be justified by the future conduct of those whom it benefits and that all My subjects will so demean themselves as to render it unnecessary to enforce the laws for such offences hereafter.

The Proclamation then mentioned the establishment of the Chamber of Princes to give an opportunity to the Princes and the States of India to advance the interests which are common to their territories and to British India, assuring the Princes of India of the Royal determination ever to maintain unimpaired their privileges, rights and dignities. It ends by stating:

It is My intention to send My dear son to India next winter to inaugurate on My behalf the new Chamber of Princes and the new Constitutions in British India. May He find mutual good-will and confidence prevailing among those on whom will rest the future service of the country, so that success may crown their labours and progressive enlightenment attend their administration and, with all My people, I pray to Almighty God that by His wisdom and under His guidance India may be led to greater prosperity and contentment and may grow to the fullness of political freedom.

On the date on which this Proclamation was published in India, Tilak was on his way in a special train to attend the Amritsar Congress. Most members of his Party were in the train. They got the opportunity of studying the King's Proclamation when the train stopped at one of the intermediate stations. Tilak consulted his friends and sent the following telegram to the King through Mr. Montagu and the Viceroy. The telegram was as follows:

Please convey to His Majesty grateful and loyal thanks of Indian Home-Rule League and the people of India for Proclamation and amnesty and assure him of Responsive Co-operation.

It is on this occasion that Tilak coined the phrase "Responsive Co-operation" which appeared in political parlance for the first time. What commotion this word caused later in the political history of India, how it was misinterpreted, cavilled at, abused, scorned and disliked by certain political parties of India and how it affected the growth of later political thought, will be described in later chapters of this narrative.

With this idea of responsive co-operation in his mind, and with this idea accepted by the leading members of his League, Tilak attended the Amritsar Congress. His contest there with Gandhi and those who accepted Gandhi's resolution of thanks to Mr. Montagu, favouring the working of the Reforms in a spirit of loyal welcome, is described in detail in the following pages.

On 27, 29, 30 and 31 December 1919, and on 1 January 1920, was held the 34th session of the Indian National Congress at Amritsar. The importance of this session lies in the fact that, it was at this session that Gandhi insisted on giving thanks to Montagu and using the Reforms sincerely for the

betterment of the government of the country and yet it was he who about eight months later launched the programme of non-cooperation. The proceedings of the session would, therefore, show how rapidly events moved in those formative days of the Indian freedom movement and it is hoped that the importance of these proceedings will be realized even at this date as forming a vital link in the history of Indian freedom.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee of this Session was the late Swami Shradhanandaji, who had, about that time, rendered conspicuous service in the cause of patriotism and religion.

Motilal Nehru was the President. He had taken a very prominent part in the agitation relating to the Punjab disorders and, as this session of the Congress was in the Punjab, he was invited to occupy the eminent post of its President. His speech was a very long one recounting the entire political situation as it stood at the date of the session. The few points mentioned below were the high-lights of his speech. He began with a reference to the Punjab which had suffered during the previous months and congratulated the people of Amritsar on their courageous public spirit in holding the session of the Congress in their city.

It is generally believed, Motilal added, that the most incompetent of the Governments in India is that of the Punjab. Its two foundation-rocks are prestige and sedition, and the proximity of the Punjab to the Indian Frontier has enabled its administrators, time and again, to enforce their will on successive Viceroys and Secretaries of State. The bogey of the Frontier has been exploited to the uttermost. After tracing the several stages of mis-government in the Punjab, he related the war activities of the O'Dwyer regime and how, during war time, and for the purpose of obtaining support for the war in kind or coin, criminal law had been openly abused and numerous proceedings taken against innocent men under the Criminal Procedure Code with the sole object of compelling them either to enlist or supply recruits. One of the favourite methods, he added, to deal with such persons was to enhance their income-tax. He criticized the Rowlatt legislation from the legal and the political point of view. Much of his criticism has already been stated in the previous pages of this narrative. He condemned Montagu's defence of the Act in Parliament

that the Tribunals under it were not Law Courts but Committees of Inquiry, more like a school-master investigating trouble at a school, or a committee of a club using its friendly services for the purpose of inquiry. Motilal caustically added, "to compare the arrest and confinement without trial of a citizen, and numerous other restraints put on his liberty of action and speech with the governance of a school or a club is, to say the least, adding gross insult to a serious wrong."

He referred to Gandhi's *Satyagraha*, as a new force, introduced into our politics, a force with the most tremendous potentialities. He added, however, "Some of us did not entirely agree with the wording of the *Satyagraha* pledge, many were of opinion that the time had not come for Civil Disobedience, but few could disagree with the essential principles of the doctrine." In this connection he quoted the comment of the President of the Yale University of America: "You can compel ignorant people to accept a Statute. You can force bad men to obey it, when they do not want to; but if a Statute or judicial decision passes the line of those duties which good and intelligent men as a body accept and impose upon themselves, it is at once nullified. The process of nullifying the law has sometimes been called Passive Resistance." From his detailed knowledge of the working of the Hunter Committee, he criticised its disappointing attitude which justified, according to him, the boycott of that Committee by the Congress leaders. In this behalf he mentioned most of the facts which were later detailed in the speech of B. Chakravarti in moving Resolution No. 4.

Motilal ended with the observation that, after most anxious consideration, the Congress Sub-Committee had come to the conclusion that, "if it was to discharge the trust laid upon it, if it was to vindicate the national honour and the honour of the great Punjabi leaders, if it was to see truth and innocence established, it could not possibly engage in an inquiry in which the people's party was so heavily handicapped." He then praised the work of the Congress Inquiry Committee and the public spirit which it had displayed in taking up the work of considering the evidence produced before it. He looked forward to its report which was then under preparation.

With his intimate knowledge of the incidents in the Punjab he traced the bloody regime of O'Dwyer in the several parts

of the Punjab and ended with the comment that the responsibility of Sir Michael O'Dwyer for much that occurred in Punjab was admitted and was established beyond doubt. It would appear, he added, that Sir Michael was striving to make the Punjab a kind of Ulster in relation to the rest of India, a bulwark of reaction against all reform.

Lord Chelmsford's responsibility was the next subject of his comment. Chelmsford must have known or ought to have known what was happening in the Punjab. The Congress Committee repeatedly drew his attention to it, but he did nothing to cut short the agony. He persistently refused to listen or interfere, kept aloof and remained absent from the scene of these happenings when hundreds of His Majesty's subjects were done to death by the military and thousands put to shameless indignity. This behaviour was characteristic of the man. After recounting the several happenings, Motilal pointed out the lessons which the crowded events of the year had taught us and the English people. To us they pointed to the path of steadfast endeavour, the path of sacrifice and patient ordeal. To Englishmen they taught the oft repeated truth that tyranny degrades those who exercise it as much as those who suffer under it.

Referring to the proposed Government of India Act, his comments were brief being chiefly confined to a "declaration of rights". He disclosed that the demand for the inclusion of such a declaration in the proposed enactment was urged before the Parliamentary Joint Committee by an Indian deputation but the Committee did not give it even the courtesy of a brief notice in their Report. We find that, he added, in many instances, the advent of Self-Government had been preceeded or accompanied by a statutory declaration of rights, e.g. in most of the Continental Constitutions of Europe and in the American Constitution such a declaration occupied a prominent place. As regards Montagu's announcement of 20 August, his comment related to the periodical Parliamentary inquiries mentioned in the announcement. The injustice, he stated, of submitting a Nation's birthright to the jurisdiction and decision of an outside body or Committee was deeply resented by many of us who felt that any such submission to jurisdiction and consequent acceptance of verdict would be essentially wrong and unworthy of the self-respect of Indians.

His comments on the *Khilafat* question were bold and he

rested his support on the ground that it was impossible for one part of the Indian people to stand aloof while the other part was suffering under a serious grievance. This was clearly shown, he added, when the vast majority of non-Muslims in India made common cause with the Muslims and abstained from participating in the recent peace celebrations. Apart from the promises and pledges given to His Majesty's Muslim subjects, they had a right to demand the application of the principle of self-determination to the component parts of the Turkish Empire in the same way as it had been applied to other countries in Europe like Poland and Yugoslavia.

Motilal's peroration was particularly striking:

What is our ultimate goal? We want freedom of thought, freedom of action, freedom to fashion our own destiny and build up an India suited to the genius of her people. We do not wish to make of India a cheap and slavish imitation of the West. We have so far sought to liberalize our Government on the Western model. Whether that will satisfy us in the future I cannot say. But let us bear in mind that Western democracy has not proved a panacea for all ills. It may be that when we get the power to mould our institutions, we shall evolve a system of Government which will blend all that is best in the East and West. We must aim at an India where all are free and have the fullest opportunities of development, where women have ceased to be in bondage, and the rigours of the caste system have disappeared; where there are no privileged classes or communities; where education is free and open to all; where capitalists and the landlords do not oppress the labourer and the rayat; where labour is respected and well paid, and poverty, the nightmare of the present generation, is a thing of the past. Life will be then worth living in this country, it will be inspired by joy and hope and the terrible misery we see round us will become a bad dream which has faded away from our memory, on our awakening to welcome the morning sun.

Many resolutions passed at this session have not been described in this brief narrative but, as I was present at this session, I am able to pick out a few which I thought had occupied foremost attention.

One such resolution, No. 4, which related to the disorders in the Punjab was in the following words:

Having regard to the correspondence between His Honour the Lieut. Governor of the Punjab and the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, this Congress is of opinion, that the Lieut. Governor's action in not

permitting even a few of the Punjab leaders undergoing imprisonment to attend and sit in the [Hunter] Committee room, even as prisoners under custody, to assist and instruct Counsel in the same manner as the Government counsel was instructed by the officials whose conduct was under investigation by the Disorders Enquiry Committee [Hunter Committee], constitutes a serious injustice and that it left no other course open to the Sub-Committee of the Congress to take than the one taken by it. This Congress, therefore, endorses and approves of the firm and dignified action taken by the Sub-Committee in appointing Commissioners to make an investigation and submit a report.

The resolution was moved by B. Chakravarty of Bengal and in his long speech, a few extracts of which have been quoted below, he stated the following facts:

The Sub-Committee of the Congress wanted permission to appear before the Hunter Committee and it was given under certain restrictions. Counsel on our side appeared for some time before the Hunter Committee. Their object was to assist the Committee in ascertaining the truth and they could only do so if, in point of fact, facilities were afforded to them for the purpose of sifting the facts brought before the Hunter Committee. One of the things which it was necessary for them to do was to cross-examine witnesses produced for the Government. You are aware that, in point of fact, statements were made by witnesses beforehand in writing which came into the hands of the Hunter Committee. No copies were given to the counsel appearing for the Congress Sub-Committee. Further, very limited power was given to the counsel. What justice is this? Although the Government was represented by counsel and such counsel had access to all the written material and although the Government officials, whose conduct was under investigation, were allowed to remain in the Committee room, our counsel were denied the right to receive instructions from their clients then in custody and the modest request that was made was this that they should be brought into the Committee room in custody and then taken to jail again. Otherwise it would be impossible to carry on the investigation to any useful purpose. It was impossible for our counsel to know the truth and, if the object of the Hunter Committee was to ascertain the truth, one fails to understand why this request was denied. An appeal was made to the Hunter Committee itself. That failed. Then Pandit Malaviya had an interview with Lord Hunter for nearly two hours and he tried to persuade Lord Hunter in regard to the necessity of his Committee interfering and recommending to the local Government to allow these gentlemen in custody to be brought into the Committee room during the time that the official witnesses were being cross-examined. That also was denied.

There was, therefore, no option but to boycott the Hunter Committee and to have a Committee of our own and I am, therefore, asking you to endorse and approve of the action taken by the Congress Sub-Committee in holding an independent enquiry on behalf of the Congress and we thank those gentlemen who sat on the Enquiry Committee as Commissioners, for their sacrifice, for the devotion they have shown to the cause of the country, the time and labour they have expended in ascertaining the evidence and sifting that evidence and in preparing a report, which they are now preparing and which will be presented to the Congress at the right time.

Another resolution was Resolution No. 5, which related to the condemnation of mob excesses in the Punjab in the following words:

This Congress, while fully recognising the grave provocation that led to a sudden outburst of mob frenzy, deeply regrets and condemns the excesses committed in certain parts of the Punjab, resulting in the loss of lives and injury to person and property during the month of last April.

Gandhi moved this resolution, which was most appropriate. He stated that he was bound to condemn mob excesses. He admitted that these were committed under grave provocation given by Government, but he wanted that even in grave provocation people should not lose their heads. He wanted true satyagraha of them—to restrain anger and to bear troubles was real satyagraha. They wanted India to be a land of *Rishis*. If so, they should enthusiastically support the resolution and admit their excesses and India was bound to progress even in a year. Swami Shradhananda seconded the resolution.

The next important resolution was Resolution No. 6, which was moved by Mrs. Besant. The Resolution was as follows:

That in view of the fact that neither the Hunter Committee nor the Congress Commission has finished the examination of witnesses and issued its Report, this Congress, while expressing its horror and indignation at the revelations already made and condemnation of the atrocities admitted, refrains from urging any definite steps to be taken against the offenders, yet having regard to the cold-blooded calculated massacre of innocent men, and children, an act without parallel in modern times, the Congress urges upon the Government of India and the Secretary of State that, as a preliminary to legal proceedings being

taken against him, General Dyer should be immediately relieved of his command.

Mrs. Besant observed:

We indict these officials on their own words spoken with a shamelessness that they did not realise apparently the criminality of what had happened, but spoke it out in public as though nothing had been done. Now there are two kinds of offences, private and public. Where a private wrong is done, where an offence is committed against an individual, there the individual has the right to forgive and forget the injury inflicted. But where wrong has been committed against the helpless and defenceless, where force has been used against unresisting and harmless crowds, where the massacre only stopped when the ammunition was exhausted, when, in a closed space, from where none could escape, the General commanding directed the fire on the outlets of the closed space, until they were choked with the bodies of the dead and of the dying, then it is not a private wrong to be forgiven, but it is a public wrong to be punished.

A similar Resolution No. 7, related to Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieut. Governor of the Punjab, being relieved of his duties. The resolution was as follows:

In view of the oppressive regime of Sir Michael O'Dwyer in the Punjab and the admitted fact brought out before the Hunter Committee that he approved of and endorsed Gen. Dyer's massacre at Jallianwala Bagh, this Congress calls upon His Majesty's Government to relieve Sir Michael O'Dwyer of his present duties in this country as a member of the Army Commission, as preliminary to necessary legal action to be taken against him.

Another resolution, No. 13, urged the recall of Lord Chelmsford in the following words:

In view of the fact that Lord Chelmsford has completely forfeited the confidence of the people of this country, this Congress humbly beseeches His Imperial Majesty to be graciously pleased immediately to recall His Excellency.

The most important resolution of the session was, however, on self-government reforms, Resolution No. 14, which was moved by C. R. Das. It was in three parts:

(1) That this Congress reiterates its declaration of last year that India is fit for full responsible government and repudiates all assumptions and assertions to the contrary wherever made.

(2) That this Congress adheres to the resolutions passed at the Delhi Congress regarding constitutional reforms and is of opinion that the Reforms Act is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing.

(3) That this Congress further urges that Parliament should take early steps to establish full responsible government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination.

Das reserved his right of reply. Tilak seconded the resolution. He likewise wanted to reserve his right of reply. But, on persuasion from the President, he did not do so. His remarks mostly related to the third part, about which he said:

What are you going to do? Are you going to accept the reforms scheme as a solution of the question either as final or for some time to come? You have declared in the second part that the Act is disappointing. What are you going to do? There are two proposals in the field. Accept it and co-operate and, with the co-operation of authorities, work it out for ten years and then after ten years the operation of the Act will be reviewed and some other steps may be taken. That is what the Act says. But we do not accept it. We do not want to wait for ten years. We want to continue our agitation for full responsible government and we shall not be satisfied with the few crumbs thrown to us in order to satisfy our hunger for the time being.

Then he stated his views, for which he had always been noted:

We will work this Act for the purpose of securing full responsible government. That is our position. That position is enunciated in this resolution that this Congress urges the Parliament to take early steps etc., etc. We are going to use the Act, though we are not satisfied with it. But we are not going to use it in fulsome praise of what is given. There is no difference of opinion as regards using it, but we are not going to thank with an *arti* [ceremonial waving of lights] in our hands. Mr. Montagu wants us to use it. Well, the question is whether we want to use it or not. We have deliberately omitted it from our resolution, because it goes without saying that every Statute of Parliament will be used in this country. We go to Parliament. We ask for legislation. We get it and we shall make it a basis of further agitation. That is our attitude. We get a bit of what we want. We shall use it and always go on agitating for more.

This was, it will be observed, a very logical and clear statement of the attitude of the Tilak school of thought, viz. accept what we get and fight for the rest.

By this time, it was well-known that Gandhi proposed to place an amendment before the gathering, though it had not been moved when Tilak spoke. The amendment related to thanking Mr. Montagu for his services. Referring to it, Tilak observed:

We are asked to thank Mr. Montagu. I have no objection to thank anybody, if you wish. But I am not very particular about thanking. We are in the habit of thanking for every little thing. This amendment will be moved and it will be for you to decide whether it is in strict consonance with the principle I have enunciated.

Immediately after Tilak's speech was over, Gandhi rose to move his amendment. When amended by Gandhi, the original Resolution would read as follows:

a) That this Congress reiterates its declaration of last year that India is fit for full responsible government and repudiates all assumptions and assertions to the contrary wherever made,

b) That this Congress adheres to the Resolutions passed at the Delhi Congress regarding Constitutional Reforms and is of opinion that the Reforms Act is inadequate and unsatisfactory,

c) That this Congress further urges that Parliament should take early steps to establish full responsible government in India in accordance with the principles of self-determination.

The real substance of the amendment, however, lay in an additional fourth clause, 'd', to be attached to the main resolution. That clause was as follows:

Pending such introduction, this Congress begs loyally to respond to the sentiments expressed in the Royal Proclamation, viz. "let the new era begin with a common determination among my people and my officers to work together for a common purpose and I trust that both the authorities and the people will co-operate so to work the reforms as to secure the early establishment of full responsible government" and this Congress offers its warmest thanks to the Rt. Hon'ble E. S. Montagu for his labours in connection with them.

It will thus be seen that Gandhi's amendment differed in three particulars from the main resolution: (1) that the word

"disappointing" occurring at the end of clause 2 was to be omitted; (2) that the Act was to be worked in a spirit of response to the sentiments expressed in the Royal Proclamation (as different from the spirit enunciated in Tilak's speech); (3) that warmest thanks were to be offered to Mr. Montagu for his services.

In proposing this, Gandhi observed:

You have seen the amendment that stands in my name. I want to give you the fullest assurance that nothing could have pleased me more than not to have appeared before you in order to divide this house. But, when I find that duty demanded of me that I should say a word even against revered countrymen of mine, even against those who have sacrificed themselves for the sake of the country, when I find that they did not make sufficient appeal to my head or to my heart and when I felt that an acceptance of the position that underlay their proposition would mean something not good for the country, I felt I at least should have my own say and make my position clear to the country. Throughout my life, I have understood the spirit of democracy. I have yielded to no one in both these things, but throughout my life, I have also found that there come occasions in a man's life, if he wants to regulate his life according to the voice of his own conscience, according to the immutable laws of God as he understands them, when he must grasp and embrace his brother parting with him as a dearest friend. That time stared me in the face two days ago. It is not a matter of removing a word here and a word there. If I could have managed to have the word "disappointing", believe me, I would not have risen before this audience and wasted your time, and my nation's, in higgling over a word. I say to you that it is not right to have that word "disappointing". My amendment expresses, in my opinion, in more graceful language, what the original clause says. I do not claim any better knowledge of English on that account. But I do think that my amendment expresses the same thing in more graceful language, but I said to myself yesterday, never mind the grace. If you can get the substance in another language, you should take it. I have, therefore, taken these three paragraphs of the main resolution in their entirety, with the exception of the adjective, "disappointing", because that also entirely represents my feeling.

I do believe with Tilak Maharaj, Mr. Das and all the other friends that we are fit for responsible government fully today. If there is to be co-operation under definite conditions, as is suggested by Tilak Maharaj, then I say, let us lay down those conditions, let us make our point perfectly clear. Their position again was, why should we thank a servant of ours. After all, who is Mr. Montagu? He is our

servant. If he has done a little bit of his duty, why do we want to thank him? It is an attitude you may sympathise with. But I say to this great audience that it is not an attitude which is worthy of ourselves. If in the heart of your hearts you can say that Mr. Montagu, throughout his career as Secretary of State for India, has done one thing, viz., he has overborne the opposition led by Lord Sydenham against this Bill and he has resisted all encroachments upon its liberal provisions, then I say extend to that extent the hand of fellowship to Mr. Montagu. He deserves our thanks. That is all my amendment means. We may not say that these reforms are disappointing in the sense in which that word is used there. We should stare the situation in the face as it exists before the country today. Tilak Maharaj tells you that we are going to make use of the Reforms Act as he has already said to Mr. Montagu, and as he has told the country, that we are going to take the fullest advantage of the reforms, then I say, be true to yourself, be true to the country and tell the country that you are going to do so. But, if you want to say, after having gone there, that you wish to be in obstruction, say that also.

But on the question of the propriety of obstruction, I say that Indian culture demands that we shall trust the man who extends the hand of fellowship. The King Emperor has extended the hand of fellowship. I suggest to you that Mr. Montagu has extended the hand of fellowship and if he has done so we do not reject the advance. Indian culture demands trust and if we are full of trust and are sufficiently manly, we shall not be afraid of the future, but face the future in a manly manner and say all right. Tell Mr. Montagu and all the officials of the bureaucracy, we are going to trust you. We shall put you in a corner and if you resist us, if you resist the advance of the country, you shall do so at your peril. This is the manly attitude that I suggest to you.

This is the amendment I have come to place before you. I again appeal to Tilak Maharaj and I appeal to Mr. Das, to every one of you, not on the strength of my service, it counts for nothing, not on the strength of my experience, but on the strength of inexorable logic. If you accept your own civilization, I ask the author of the commentaries of the Bhagwat Gita [Tilak], if he accepts the teachings of Bhagwat Gita, then let him extend the hand of fellowship to Mr. Montagu.

Jinnah seconded Gandhi's amendment and, in the course of his speech, he observed:

Now Lokamanya Tilak comes on this platform and has told you that we want to use the Act, make the fullest use of it, we will get into the Legislative Councils. We will accept Ministerships, in fact we shall make the fullest possible use of it, but may I know, in the name

of Heaven, in the name of everything that is sacred, why does not the Congress say so in its resolution and give a true lead to thousands who are outside waiting to know your opinion? I have no hesitation in saying on this platform that there is a school in this country whose intention is to obstruct and not to work the Reforms. I make bold to say that. If you are intending to co-operate, if you wish to take up Ministerships, if the Act which places such opportunities and advantages in your way is worked properly, then I say it will be impossible to resist inquiry being held earlier. I ask you this question, do you object to work the Reforms so as to make the establishment of full Responsible Government as early as possible [Cries of *No, No*]? Then why not say so? I, therefore, say that Mahatma Gandhi does not propose to do anything more than what this house has expressed over and over again within the last few minutes, that we must work the Reform Act and the only dispute is whether it should form part of the resolution or not. With regard to the other part relating to the question of giving thanks to Mr. Montagu, I say that I am no friend of Mr. Montagu but I believe in one principle and that is, whether a man is my friend or my opponent, when he has done something for which he deserves thanks, I am willing to raise my hat to him. Let this Indian National Congress rise to that height and express its thanks for what he has done. I have no doubt in my mind that Mr. Montagu has laboured, I tell you from my own personal knowledge, as no other Englishman has laboured for the Reform of India.

Gandhi's amendment was followed by another amendment by Mrs. Besant to the original resolution worded as follows:

That this Congress welcomes the Reform Act as opening the gateway of freedom to the Indian Nation and as giving her power to walk on her own feet along the road to Responsible Government, thus forming the first substantial stage on that road, and it earnestly begs the people to take the utmost advantage of its provisions so as to reach the goal in the shortest possible time. It places on record its gratitude to Mr. Montagu and Lord Sinha for their strenuous work against greatest difficulties both in India and Great Britain.

The arguments contained in Mrs. Besant's speech were very similar to those of Gandhi and Jinnah except that she introduced Lord Sinha's name along with Mr. Montagu. She bore with great patience and courage, frequent interruptions to her speech upholding the great services of Mr. Montagu. Her amendment was supported by Bomanji of Bombay.

The motion about Self-Government had created such

excitement that one amendment was followed by another and, accordingly, Bipinchandra Pal followed with another amendment adding the following clause to the original motion:

This Congress in the meanwhile recommends that the provisions of the Reform Act be used as far as possible with a view to secure full Responsible Government at an early date and it desires to record its thanks to Mr. Montagu for his labours in connection with the Reforms,

In substance, Pal's amendment was the same as Gandhi's amendment but everyone appeared to be anxious to put forward in his own words the prominent idea: (1) that the Reforms were to be used as far as possible, (2) with a view to securing full Responsible Government at an early date. The idea ran in common through all the amendments, commencing with Gandhi's. Pal supported his amendment in a vigorous speech in his own characteristic way. He observed:

It has been asked what lead you are going to give to the country: firstly that it is not going to boycott the Reforms and secondly that it is going to use the Reforms, so far as the Reforms will lend themselves to such use, for the purpose of obtaining Self-Government at an early date. We shall obstruct surely in the interest of the country if the occasion demands obstruction. We shall help, we shall co-operate when such co-operation will mean the submission of the will of the Governor to the will of the people's representatives.

As for giving thanks to Mr. Montagu, thanks precede—these are English ways, not mine, not Mahatma Gandhi's—thanks precede expectation of favours to come. I am prepared to thank anybody for anything. It does not matter, but I am not prepared to cite His Majesty's Proclamation as our new Magna Charta. I refuse to take my stand upon the Proclamation. We have already thanked His Majesty for His gracious sentiment and that ought to be enough for His Majesty and for us.

Mahomed Ali supported Pal's amendment in an Urdu speech.

Other speeches followed more or less on the same lines and ultimately a stage was reached when the leading men put their heads together and a compromise resolution was arrived at on the main proposition on the following terms:

The first three clauses would remain unaltered but the fourth clause would be, "pending such introduction this Congress trusts that, so far as may be possible, the people

will so work the Reforms as to secure an earlier establishment of full Responsible Government and this Congress offers thanks to the Rt. Hon'ble E. S. Montagu for his labours in connection with the Reforms." This was accepted as a compromise by all except Mrs. Besant. Her amendment was therefore put to the vote and was declared lost. The compromise resolution was thereafter put to the vote, Das making a speech clearly stating that co-operation when necessary to advance our cause will be offered but obstruction also when that is necessary for the advancement of our cause. "We are not opposed," he said, "to co-operation if co-operation helps us to attain our ends. We are not opposed to obstruction, plain downright obstruction, when that helps to attain our political goal. The three propositions which I moved this morning remain just as they are with the word "disappointing" at the end of the second clause. Another clause is added which includes thanks to Mr. Montagu." The compromise resolution was then put to the vote and carried. Thus ended the keen conflict between the views of Das and Tilak, inclusive of "obstruction when necessary", and Gandhi's and Jinnah's, that the reforms were to be used for the purpose of obtaining responsible Government, and not thrown away.

Other resolutions then followed of which it is necessary to mention only a few.

Resolution No. 15 related to Khilafat. This topic is included in this brief narrative because of its subsequent history, and the hope entertained at that time by the leading men of the Congress that this gesture of goodwill to the Muslims would permanently establish cordial relations between the two communities, although I could say from my own knowledge that even at that time there was, in many quarters, very great unwillingness to introduce this foreign element into Indian politics. The resolution about the Khilafat was as follows:

This Congress respectfully protests against the hostile attitude of some of the British Ministers towards the Turkish and Khilafat question as disclosed by their utterances and most earnestly appeals to and urges upon His Majesty's Government to settle the Turkish question in accordance with the just and legitimate sentiments of Indian Musalmans and the solemn pledges of the Prime Minister, without which there will be no real contentment among the people of India.

Thus the Congress went as far as it could to placate Muslim opinion by entering into a matter which related to European politics, viz. the dealings of the British Government with Turkey. Pal in his speech on the Resolution referred to the political side of this question. He adopted the same line of thought as was disclosed in the President's initial speech on this topic. Several speeches on these lines followed and, ultimately, the Khilafat resolution was carried unanimously, thus constituting a landmark in the history of the Congress. How far it proved useful in creating a permanent entente between the two communities will become clear in the later chapters of this narrative.

The last important resolution related to the "Declaration of Rights". Consequent on what had happened during previous months and the possibility of the British Parliament considering the details of the proposed Reform Act with a view to the early establishment of full Responsible Government in India, it was thought necessary to state clearly and in detail what rights India desired to be embodied in the enactment. The resolution was as follows:

This Congress is emphatically of opinion that in the immediate and imperative interest of this country as well as of the British Empire, a Statute should be forthwith passed by the Imperial Parliament to guarantee the civil rights of His Majesty's Indian subjects and embodying the following provisions:

(1) That British India is one and indivisible and all political power is inherent in the people thereof to the same extent as in any other people or nation of the British Empire.

(2) That all Indian subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalised or resident in India are equal before the law, and there shall be no penal or administrative law in force in this country, whether substantive or procedural, of a discriminative nature.

(3) That no Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, property or in respect of free speech or writing or of the right of association except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice and as a result of lawful and open trial.

(4) That every Indian subject shall be entitled to bear arms subject to the purchase of a license as in Great Britain, and that the right shall not be taken away save by a sentence of an ordinary Court of Justice.

(5) That the press shall be free and that no license or security shall be demanded on the registration of a press or newspaper.

(6) That corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on any subject

of His Majesty save under conditions applying equally to all other British subjects.

(7) That all Laws, Ordinances and Regulations now or hereafter brought into existence that are anyhow inconsistent with the provisions of this Statute shall be void and of no validity whatever.

The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously. Dr. Moonje's invitation was accepted for the next Congress to meet at Nagpur in December 1920. This terminated the proceedings of the Amritsar Congress which marked, for reasons I have already explained, an important stage in the freedom movement of this country.

It will be pertinent to note here, in connection with the question whether a declaration of public rights should be included in a constitutional enactment, the strong and persistent opposition of the British Government even at the Indian Round Table Conference (1930-1934) to the inclusion of such a declaration in the Government of India Act.

The British Government's objections to such inclusion were based on their experience and were on two main grounds: (1) Such a declaration would prove an embarrassment to India in her first attempt to evolve freedom suited to her own circumstances, and (2) when such embarrassment does arise, the Indian Government of the day would not hesitate to tamper with the provisions of such a declaration to promote its policies and purposes.

The objections of the British Government prevailed at the Indian Round Table Conference and, accordingly, the Government of India Act of 1935 omitted such a declaration. But the Constitution which India framed after the attainment of freedom contained such a declaration and it is interesting for constitutional lawyers in India to note, from time to time, the attempts of the present Government of India to interfere with, modify and even render nugatory the provisions of the declaration of rights, to suit its purposes. But more about this in a later chapter of this narrative.

CHAPTER SIX

After Jallianwala Bagh (1919—1920)

IT WAS a busy day in the Bombay High Court; one of those fine wintry mornings in December when the breeze from the sea is cold but not biting. I was just beginning an important Appeal in the Chief Justice's Court when, on 2 December 1919, I got the following wire from Madan Mohan Malaviya from Lahore:

Can you join us immediately here to complete work of Congress Punjab Inquiry Commission. Matter most urgent, if so, wire when starting.

I wired back:

Leaving tomorrow

Malaviya wired again on the 4th, thanking me for my prompt response. It took some time to make preparations and ultimately I left for Lahore on 10 December 1919 and reached there on the 12th. When I read the wire of invitation, I knew that it would be the beginning of an important phase in my public career, and would provide an opportunity of working, with sufficient initiative and freedom, on an independent line of public activities. The attraction of the invitation lay in the fact that I would have the opportunity of working with such leaders as Malaviya, Das, Motilal Nehru and last, but not the least, Gandhi. The last name powerfully attracted me, though I had not then the pleasure of a close acquaintance with that personality. My contact with him was then confined to a brief occasion, when we met in the year 1919 at a house in Gamdevi (since famous as his abode in Bombay), to consider the proposal whether Gandhi should

become the President of the Bombay Branch of the Home Rule League, of which Jinnah and myself were respectively President and Vice-President. That section of the Home Rule League had, for a few years, conducted very efficiently the work of public education in and round about Bombay, by means of lectures delivered at frequent intervals in Bombay City, and by the distribution of leaflets and other material in Bombay City and Gujerat. In an evil moment, some of the promoters of this League conceived the idea of asking Gandhi to be its head, in order that the Bombay Branch of the League might assume the same importance as its sister branches, over one of which Tilak presided and, over another, Mrs. Besant. When the idea was mooted at a meeting of the Committee of our League, I strongly opposed it. I feared, from my distant knowledge of Gandhi, that his presence at the head of the League, at a critical time when it was carrying on a patient agitation on constructive lines, would be disastrous. My apprehensions were based upon my knowledge of Gandhi, his ideals and methods, which I had obtained during my conversations with Gokhale shortly before his death. Gandhi had then signalised his entry as a probationer into the Servants of India Society by starting one morning the work of cleaning the latrines of the little colony of the Society at Poona. Promptly news was brought to Gokhale that his new recruit had commenced a form of activity which, notwithstanding its eminent usefulness, many of the associates of the Society did not quite appreciate. Gokhale was approached and succeeded ultimately in inducing Gandhi to abandon his methods in favour of others more popular with Gokhale and his colleagues. I happened to meet Gokhale shortly after this incident. He recalled it with great amusement, and narrated it with a wealth of detail, not unmingled with sarcasm.

Gandhi then had made a great name in South Africa, and with consequential prestige, he had arrived in India. Incidentally, I asked Gokhale what he thought of this great man. I added, "He appears to be a great ascetic. His sense of values is different from ours, his vision is almost that of a seer." I frankly admitted to Gokhale that, having spent my childhood in the company of an ancestor who had similar affinities with ascetic methods, this great figure appealed to me. Gokhale, with a smile, replied, "Yes, I think this persona-

lity is going to play a great part in the future history of India. Mark my words," he added, "you are much younger than I am. I may not live to see the day, but I visualize it clearly before me, that Gandhi is going to be in the vanguard of a great movement when some of us are gone. Remember, that on occasions when the passions of the people have to be raised to great heights of emotion and sacrifice or to be brought into close vision of high ideals, Gandhi is an admirable leader. There is something in him which at once enchains the attention of the poor man and he establishes, with a rapidity which is his own, an affinity with the lowly and the distressed. But be careful," said Gokhale, "that India does not trust him on occasions where delicate negotiations have to be carried on with care and caution and where restraint and tact will make for success, acting on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread. He has done wonderful work in South Africa, he has welded the different sections of Indians into one patriotic and united community, but I fear that when the history of the negotiations, which it was his privilege to carry on at one stage, is written with impartial accuracy, it will be found that his actual achievements were not as meritorious as is popularly imagined."

Gokhale then referred to his public tribute to Gandhi's work and worth in his speech at the Lahore Congress of 1909:

Fellow Delegates, after the immortal part which Mr. Gandhi has played in Indian affairs, I must say it will not be possible for any Indian, at any time, here or in any other assembly of Indians, to mention his name without deep emotion and pride. Gentlemen, it is one of the privileges of my life that I know Mr. Gandhi intimately and I can tell you that a purer, a nobler, a braver and a more exalted spirit has never moved on this earth. Mr. Gandhi is one of those men, who, living an austere simple life themselves and devoted to all the highest principles of love to their fellow beings and to truth and justice, touch the eyes of the weaker brethren as with magic and give them a new vision. He is a man who may be well described as a man among men, a hero among heroes, a patriot among patriots, and we may well say that in him Indian humanity, at the present time, has really reached its highest watermark.

With this knowledge of Gandhi, I opposed his entry into the Home Rule League. Jinnah, Sobhani, Jamnadas Dwarka-

las and other friends, whose opinion was entitled to great respect, favoured his entry. We adjourned the meeting and had another, at which Gandhi was invited to be present. Without votes being recorded in a regular form, opinions were invited. They stated theirs, so did I mine, which was unfavourable. Asked in detail to state my objections I said, addressing Gandhi, "You are an all-India man, in fact a world figure. Your ideals are international, the gospel which you preach is for the acceptance of the entire human race; you have even transcended the limits of nationalism; I am doubtful whether it would be right for you, and for us to allow you, to be bottled up within the confines of a small organization like our League, whose region of activities is limited and variable, and whose methods have to change from time to time, in response to the attitude of the British Government, sometimes descending into a form of hostility, which you may probably find to be in conflict with your gospel of love and peace." "It is not impossible," I added, "that you will demand from us, before long, a change in our objects and aims, and even try to secure in our creed a place for some of your pet theories, which many of us may be inclined to regard as fantastic fads."

Gandhi, for a time, was inclined to agree with my view and observed: "A great deal of what you say appeals to me, though I am disturbed by your description as 'fads' of some of my theories. May I tell you that the only 'fad' on which I would insist, if I ultimately decided to join your League, would be a common language for India, to be found in one of the vernaculars of the country, and the gospel of *Swadeshi* [buy Indian]. You need have no apprehension that any other theories of mine your League will be called upon to accept." This assurance was enough to satisfy most of my friends, and ultimately it was decided that he should join the League and become its head.

The ultimate results of his accession are well-known; how, for example, in course of time, his other pet theories were fathered on the League, and how it ultimately became extinct after a few months, leading to the rise of another short-lived organisation called the *Swarajya Sabha*. A detailed account of all this is outside the scope of the present chapter and I will content myself with stating that, before long, the Home Rule League disappeared, and the useful work which it had

carried on was stopped; its ranks were disintegrated, its members were dispersed, finally joining opposing political factions; and, last of all, a fund of a lac and a half of rupees which had been donated for the League's activities by S. R. Bomonji, a public-spirited citizen of Bombay, remained unclaimed in the till of the Bombay High Court, where it lay, until recently, with accumulated interest.

With this experience of Gandhi, my desire to know him at closer quarters became irresistible. On the receipt of the telegram from Malaviya, I decided to abandon my work in the High Court and leave for Lahore. The mystery of Gandhi's personality was powerful. To know the man, to study his ideals, to sift the admixture of politics and spirituality which he had made so popular; all this formed an unquenchable desire. I took some time to consider whether I would accept the invitation of Malaviya. I had then many important legal engagements on hand, but I soon set myself free and started for Lahore.

I left Bombay on 10 December 1919. A few friends came to see me off and, after a very cold journey, I reached Lahore on the morning of the 12th.

I put up at Harkishanlal's house at 7 Ferozeshah Road. Tyabji and Malaviya were also staying there.

After seeing Motilal Nehru, I called on Gandhi to take orders from him. Gandhi was living in an old and historic building, then in the ownership of Rambhuj Dutt Choudhry, with his charming wife Sarala Devi in command. I was led into Gandhi's presence. He was surrounded by his scribes and associates, all wrapped in thick blankets of homespun wool, squatting on the ground in the Indian way. With a cheerful smile he received me: "So you are our new recruit." I said, "Yes." "Well, you will have to work very hard." "I have come straight from the Bar," I said, "and am not afraid of hard work." Harkishan Lal, my host, was then in prison under a Martial Law sentence. His hospitable daughter, Sushila Devi, looked after our arrangements. She was the offspring of his Maratha wife. She possessed the virtues of both her parents. That charming house was my abode during all the time I stayed in Lahore.

Those were eventful days. Daily we all met, Gandhi, Malaviya, Das, Motilal, Tyabji and myself. The work went on under the supervision of Das. We had the assistance of

an energetic Secretary, Santanam, and occasionally had conversations with Bakshi Tekchand, later a successful judge of the Lahore High Court and now an important personality in New Delhi. I am quoting material extracts from my diary showing how the work proceeded from day to day.

- 15 December: Called on Setalvad at Faletti's Hotel. He was a member of the Hunter Committee appointed by the Government. Discussed situation with him. He advises co-operation with the Hunter Committee even now. Accordingly I spoke to Malaviya, but he justifies abstention on the ground mainly that the Hunter Committee inquiry was not impartial. Setalvad's own attitude was not very sympathetic. Work of settling statements finished. From tomorrow work begins of preparing matter for the Press.
- 16 December: Morning walk via Anarkali, Hira Mandi, Badshahi Mosque. Saw signs of firing. Had them explained by an intelligent Muslim student of Islamia College. Hard work in the office. Starting preparing statements finally for the Press. Walk in the evening with Tyabji and Malaviya.
- 21 December: Called on Gandhi. Talked over Lahore incidents.
- 22 December: Read and discussed his draft report on Amritsar incidents.
- 24 December: King's Proclamation about new Reforms and amnesty to Political prisoners—Proclamation very well worded. Great excitement and expectations in Lahore. Walk in the morning. Thereafter attended Congress Committee office. Arranged for files of statements to be taken to Bombay for publication. Short walk, then reading again after dinner.

Our method of work was as follows: We met, in an office room, in the morning at about 11 o'clock. The work was then distributed. Some of us examined witnesses, care being taken that another of us should be present to put questions in cross-examination, like a Defence Counsel, so that the usual safeguards of truth, operative in a judicial tribunal, were not ignored.

The work of examining witnesses was generally done by Tyabji because of his capacity for patient work, born of his long experience as a High Court Judge at Baroda. He also knew Urdu very well, the language in which many of the witnesses tendered their evidence. I handled the depositions after they had been recorded by Tyabji, and translated them into English. We then touched them up, generally excluding portions which we thought were too sensational for publication or looked like exaggerations. Gandhi and Motilal were

generally approached towards the evening to discuss points on which it was thought desirable that their opinion should be obtained.

While we worked on the Congress Committee, the Hunter Committee appointed by Government also held its sittings in Lahore. The Congress had boycotted this Committee. A few Indians worked on that Committee: Jagat Narayan of the United Provinces, Chimanlal Setalvad from Bombay, Sultan Ahmad Khan from Gwalior. The non-participation of the Congress had undoubtedly rendered the Indian side comparatively weak. I used occasionally to visit the sittings of the Hunter Committee and my impressions of its work have been recorded in my diary. The entry of 17 December 1919 reads as follows:

At Lahore

Attended sitting of Hunter Committee. Major Smith and Mr. Boswell, I.C.S. were examined. Both looked astute bureaucrats.

Hunter's questions were like Crown Prosecutor's leading through examination-in-chief.

Rankin supplied gaps.

Setalvad, as if defence counsel, did cross-examination, which was good but not stern enough, rather weak, submissive and apologetic.

Jagat Narayan—strong, but inartistic.

Sultan Ahmed—inadmissible; the whole was altogether a poor show, full of race bias with organized strength on the European side, impotence on the Indian. The show is indicative of the exact nature of our fight against Government—Cannot say now whether Congress Committee was wrong in boycotting Hunter Committee; they ought to have put reason of boycott more courageously forward, namely the absence of Indian strength and of elements of impartiality in the Committee as constituted. Long talk with Das. Met Rangaswami Iyengar who is here on his return from London.

Motilal then lived in a house which he had hired in Lahore. Jawaharlal was with him for a part of the time. My first sight of them left a great impression on my mind. The father and son used to be immaculately dressed, most of the time in European costume.

A lasting impression which the evening meetings have left on my mind is the fact that Gandhi's voice in our consultations was always for moderation and restraint. The rest of us had been ardent advocates in our professions and it was perhaps

difficult for us to take up the role of judges in discriminating between what was worth recording and what was not. Gandhi invariably assumed the role of a stern judge in sifting the chaff from the substance. He took infinite pains to see that what was to be put before the public was the quintessence of truth, as our united eyes could perceive it. The occasions were not infrequent when we differed violently as to what was the truth. Often a whole day was spent in discussing the pros and cons. Das and I often advocated our view with great insistence; Das often thumped the table with a vigorous gesture, which was his favourite habit when putting forward his point of view. Motilal did the same, but with great restraint. I added my voice persuasively. Tyabji spoke with the caution of a judge. He had been one for many years in Baroda. Gandhi often stood alone against all this fusillade of argument; the process went on occasionally for a day or two; Gandhi struggling with his weak voice, but with stern logic, and clear arguments, which cut like a sharp rapier through our knotted reasoning. The following note in my diary of 23 December correctly represents my sentiments:

Whole day spent in discussing Gandhi's draft report. "Chapter—Amritsar".

Gandhi's mind clear, virile, truthful, deserves to be a leader, style racy, pointed, subdued and restrained.

Das was on many occasions pugnacious but Gandhi usually won by gentle and persuasive reasoning.

I can recall more than one occasion when Das rose from such interviews, at the end of the day, thumping the table with a characteristic remark, "Damn it all, Gandhi, you are right and we are wrong." Gandhi thus had his way with us by force of sheer reasoning and persuasion.

This occurrence day after day left a great impression on my mind. It showed how a clear intellect could reach right conclusions in detachment, unclouded by prejudice or passion. Gandhi's one aim seemed to be to reach the truth through the complexity of the evidence we could lay our hands on. He had a noble vision of the task which we had set before us: to put before the public, British and Indian, the plain truth of the awful Jallianwala Bagh massacre, to reveal to the public eye the blood-thirstiness of the officials concerned in the same, and the race passion which lay behind it. The

main features of the incidents, plain and unadorned, were so glaringly blood-curdling that they required no embellishment to provoke general horror and detestation. Gandhi realised this more than we did and felt that the success of our effort depended mainly on the accuracy and truthfulness of our record, and that restraint and understatement would be not the defects but the virtues of our production.

I am told, although I have had no verification of it from Gandhi, that every morning before he entered on his duties, he fervently prayed that he might be given the strength and vision to find out the truth in our inquiry and to proclaim it to the world. He apparently thought that the task was so stupendous and full of dangers and difficulties that it would only succeed with Divine assistance. Whether he sought it or not, I cannot say, but he certainly achieved a miracle when he succeeded on all occasions in persuading his strong and insistent colleagues to accept his moderate conclusions.

A characteristic instance that I can recall, even at this distance of time, was with reference to the discussion whether Dyer had deliberately decoyed the crowd into the Jallianwala Bagh enclosure with a view to giving them a deterrent punishment. There was a large body of evidence, which had gradually gathered on our hands, tending to support this view. Some of us were struck with the diabolical nature of the design and were anxious that, if sufficient evidence were forthcoming, we should set it forth in our report. Several reliable men and women had spoken of incidents pointing to the existence of such a design in the mind of Dyer and his colleagues. It was undoubtedly a dreadful theory to propound, unless fully supported by evidence, but we felt that there was sufficient proof in its support and its disclosure to the public would be justified. We were, therefore, slowly and cautiously working up to it, carefully gathering together the scattered threads.

Gandhi, from the start, had set his face against it. I remember many skirmishes with him, we trying to maintain that the evidence justified such a conclusion, and Gandhi steadfastly opposing it. He often remarked to us, "My dear friends, you have been all your lives such ardent advocates that you cannot easily assume the strict and rigorous role of judges, which you happen to be in this enquiry." We, however, differed on this point, and ultimately it was decided

that I should make a draft, setting forth our view with reasons for it, and that, when approved by us, the paragraph should be submitted for the final acceptance of Gandhi.

Accordingly, with great care, I made a draft, in which I set out, one after another, the several facts, which, in our opinion, justified our conclusion. I wound up by cautiously suggesting, as a very justifiable view, Dyer's intention to draw the crowd into an ambush provided by the closed enclosure of the Jallianwala Bagh. I showed the draft to my colleagues. They approved of it. The skill of the draft lay in the fact that the material facts were carefully marshalled one after another, suggesting as irresistible the conclusion we sought to draw.

We met the next morning and the draft was read out to Gandhi. With quick insight he saw through its design and said with a smile, "Yes, I accept this draft, provided you allow me to deal with it for a short time." We agreed. After a few hours of working on the draft, Gandhi produced another, in which he undid the effect of our draft by interpolating, at appropriate intervals, facts of a contrary nature. It was a marvel of the clearness of his memory and intellect and also a high tribute to his love of truth and justice. In the end we accepted his view and omitted the matter from our Report.

The Report was drawn up by Gandhi, with assistance from me. The Report is an admirable production for the care and restraint with which the facts have been stated and conclusions arrived at. The framers of the Report in a covering letter forwarding the Report to Motilal Nehru, Ex-Officio President of the Congress Sub-Committee and also the President of the All India Congress Committee, observe as follows:

We examined the statements of over 1,700 witnesses and have selected for publication about 650 statements which will be found in the accompanying volumes of our Report. The statements excluded were mostly statements proving the same class of facts.

Every admitted statement was verified by one of us and was accepted only after we were satisfied as to the *bona fides* of the witness... Every such statement bears the name of the witness at the foot thereof. No statement was accepted without sufficient cross-examination of the witness.

It will be observed that many witnesses are men of position and

leaders in their own districts or villages.

It will be further observed that some of the witnesses have made very serious allegations against officials. In each and every case, the witnesses were warned by us of the consequences of making those allegations and they were admitted only when the witnesses adhered to their statements, in spite of the knowledge of the risk they personally ran and the damage that might ensue to the cause by reason of exaggeration or untruth. We have moreover rejected those statements which could not be corroborated, although in some cases we were inclined to believe the witnesses. Such, for instance, were the statements regarding ill-treatment of women.

The majority of the statements were given in the vernaculars. We have endeavoured to procure the most accurate translations but the statements appended to our Report may be treated as original, as we checked the witnesses through the translations and made corrections or amendments ourselves wherever necessary.

We have freely availed ourselves of the evidence led before the Disorders Enquiry Committee [Hunter Committee] in order to strengthen or correct our conclusion.

No greater testimony to the accuracy and restraint of our Report could have been given than the verdict, as stated below, of one who was accustomed all his life to sift and weigh evidence before judicial tribunals.

When I returned to the High Court after six months' absence in the Punjab, I met Inverarity, the then doyen of the Bombay Bar. He was then in his declining years. Yet the fire of his advocacy, his ripeness of judgment, his love of accuracy, were still his own and had remained undiminished. He asked me where I had disappeared all these months. I explained to him what I had been doing in the Punjab, and ended by mentioning that our deliberations had crystallised into a report which had then been published. He said he would like to read it. I gave him a copy. He finished it overnight, and next morning said to me, in his characteristic manner, "I should like to put a bullet through your head for writing such a report. It is a damaging document, and you know its effect is largely due to the very careful way in which you have presented your facts and the restraint with which you have drawn your conclusions. Who is responsible for such a Report?" I said, "Mainly Gandhi." "You know," he said, "its restraint makes the Report all the more damaging from the British point of view, because I have always thought that if the Indian case were presented with accuracy, truth

and restraint, as your Report does, it would cause far more damage to our rule in India than the rubbish some newspapers write from day to day and you can take it from me that, when this Report is read in England, it will produce a far greater effect than in India, where people delight in hyperboles."

I am quoting Inverarity's testimony because he happened to be, for many years, the doyen of the Bombay Bar, head and shoulders over every other member of it. His own advocacy was always inclined to be in the direction of understatement, and he won his cases by the sheer force of his argument, without recourse to exaggeration, embellishment or equivocation.

The Report made a great impression in India. The way it was prepared was interesting. We had a mass of evidence before us, the statements of men and women who had suffered under the Martial Law regime, many of them blood-curdling narratives. We excluded a lot, obeying Gandhi's desire to avoid sensationalism, but still a large number remained. Some of these narratives were extremely pathetic, as, for instance, the statement of a widow of her experience during the night of the bloody massacre when she went late at night to look for the body of her missing husband. She searched through the carnage which Dyer and his Sepoys had effected; she turned over each corpse, looked at the face, marched on until she came across her husband's body. He was half dead, but the spark of life had not been totally extinguished. He was conscious but so badly wounded as to be unable to move or help himself. She found wolves licking his blood without venturing to bite, as all signs of life were not extinct.

We were anxious to preserve for public reading some of the important depositions, like the one I have summarized above. The difficulty was about putting them in a permanent form within the short time at our disposal, because we were racing against time in our desire to publish our Report before the official Hunter Committee brought out their report, which was expected in February or March of that year (1920).

I was deputed to look after the completion and publication of the typed copies, first of the evidence, and later of the Report after finally revising it. Jehangir Bomanji Petit (now no more) had then in his hands a public fund of five lacs of

rupees collected mainly through the efforts of Malaviya for the express purpose of giving relief to those who had suffered in the Punjab massacre. I drew from him a sum of Rs. 50,000 on coming to Bombay. My difficulties in inducing Presses in Bombay to undertake the printing of the typed statements are recorded in the following entries in my diary:

- 5 *January* 1920: Saw Manager Anklesaria of the *Bombay Chronicle* about printing evidence of Punjab inquiry—disappointing and disheartening refusal. Saw Manager of Commercial Press—same reply. Then tried *Tatva Vivechak Press*—more encouraging, though rates very high.
- 6 *January*: Started work of printing evidence. Friends assisting in earnest. Work went on from day to day. New friends gathered.

Such entries continue from 5 *January* to 12 *January*.

- 21 *January*: Gave part of printing work to Umar Sobhani but he soon gave it up.

I was however fortunate in getting the free assistance of about thirty graduates, all working day and night under my supervision and direction. The drawing room of my house at Thakurdwar was converted into a typists' office. My friends, meeting shortly after a morning cup of tea, went on until lunch time. They met again an hour later and went on until six o'clock in the evening, and met again after dinner to about 1.00 past midnight. My wife, who was then alive, looked after their food and other arrangements, and in this way we worked during the whole of *January* and *February*. The matter was too voluminous to be managed by one printing press and I had to requisition six different presses, but with the skill of my friends that was done, and, by the end of *February*, I was able to issue a neatly bound printed volume of about 1,001 pages with a copious index of names and subjects. With this in my hands, I started for Lahore on 13 *February* 1920. On reaching there, I went straight to Gandhi. He asked: "What have you done with the evidence? Have you been able to type and index the whole of it?" With great pride, I produced from my attaché case a volume containing a neat print of the whole evidence, with an alphabetical index of names, dates etc. I can recall the great surprise and joy which Gandhi felt. I explained that this was

the work of my Bombay friends, mostly graduates who had neglected all other work and laboured on this production, day and night, for a couple of months. I may record here the singular fact, of which my friends and myself felt very proud, that the labour spent on the preparation and publication of this compilation cost the Indian National Congress nothing.

The final preparation of the evidence and report was carried out under interesting circumstances. Gandhi, Malaviya and myself met in the middle of February 1920 in the charming Seva Ashram (hermitage of service) of Shiva Prasad Gupta in the Nagwa suburb on the banks of the Ganges at Banaras. My diary entries of this time give a vivid picture:

- 16 February: Reached Banaras at 5 p.m. Put up at Nagwa suburb, in the fine house of Shiva Prasad Gupta.
- 17 February: Motilal Nehru arrived. Visited Hindu University with Malaviya and Gandhi.
- 18 February: Das arrived. Consultation every day from 12 noon to 7 p.m. about the report.
- 19 February: Consultation went on about report.
- 21 February: Left Banaras at 5 a.m. Boarded Calcutta Mail at Moghal Serai at 7-45.

So far as I can recall at this date, we had then the benefit of Jawaharlal's occasional presence amongst us. Whenever consulted, his advice was for moderation like Gandhi's. It was a glorious time; so many men, young and old, working on one common task. It was perhaps the last time that we all met in friendly co-operation, for, later, we dispersed and joined different political schools, often in conflict with one another. I remember many occasions when, in our deliberations, interesting differences of opinion arose, and compromises were arrived at. Gandhi made the first draft of the Report in a quiet little room. My *charpoy* was just a few paces outside on the verandah, near Malaviya's bed, and every morning I had the pleasure, at dawn, of hearing from his lips the mellifluent verses and *Stotras* of Shankaracharya. The Pandit enjoyed up to his demise a well-deserved reputation of being the most refined Hindu of modern times. Half awake, half asleep, I listened to his beautiful voice. His Sanskrit pronunciation shared the defect common to his provincial surroundings, being less pure than in Madras and Maharashtra. Sometimes he sang a *richa* from the Rigveda,

recounting the glory of the dawn (*Ushas*), as the ancient Vedic seer had seen it—the warbling of the birds, the twinkle of the fading stars, and the ripple of the brook on whose grassy banks the Vedic aspirant offered his worship to the Gods of Nature.

After tea we used to start our work, which went on, with a short interval for the mid-day meal, until the evening. Most of the drafting was done by Gandhi, with the help of one or two scribes. We broke up after about three weeks, when I returned to Bombay. The rest of the Report used to be sent to me in Bombay, through a loyal intermediary, Dr. Parashram. It was all written in Gandhiji's characteristic handwriting, typing was avoided and every page was written in his own hand. It would be a priceless document if it has been preserved anywhere, a fitting relic of those glorious days which should find a prominent place in the national archives. I wonder if Jawaharlal, with his immense power and resources, would endeavour to trace it. My duty was to go through it and make final alterations, which duty Gandhi, with his characteristic confidence and humility, left entirely in my hands, with the final obligation of seeing the Report through the Press.

By that time, Das, Motilal and Tyabji had dropped out, and Gandhi and myself worked hard on the publication of the Report. Our incessant work is recorded in my diary as follows:

- 8-10 March: Started work on Punjab Report. Work in full swing.
- 11-14 March: Lying ill with high fever.
- 16-18 March: Working in bed on the Report.
- 20 March: Hard work on Punjab Report. Gandhi called to see me, he left for Delhi today.
- 21 March: Working hard on Punjab Report.
- 22 March: Working till 4-30 in the morning. Punjab Report printing work finished.
- 26 March: Punjab Report published. *Times of India*, *Bombay Chronicle* notice it.
- 28 March: Started work of binding Report, arranging matter with aid of 30 graduate volunteers. Drawing room converted into godown.
- 29 March - 2 April: Binding work at home.
- 3 April: Stopped in afternoon, whole matter—all handed over to the *Indu Prakash*. Glad. Work finished.

With incessant work, day and night, we were able to offer our Report to the public a few days before the Hunter Committee's Report saw the light of the day.

As indicative of the difficulties which arose in the preparation and printing of the evidence and, later, the Report of the Congress Sub-Committee, the enthusiasm with which many young men voluntarily helped me in Bombay for several weeks, and lastly the confidence and co-operation of Gandhi from time to time in my finishing the work rapidly, it will, I think, be interesting to place before the public a material part of the correspondence which then passed between me and Gandhi and occasionally between me and Jawaharlal Nehru. These letters which have not yet seen the light of the day, so far as I am aware, will, it is hoped, help the public to obtain a vivid picture of the mutual good-will, confidence and reliance with which the work was done at the time, but for which features the voluminous task could not have been accomplished with the rapidity and accuracy, which, for a long time thereafter, formed the subject of congratulations from Gandhi.

I may be permitted to add that if in our subsequent political activities the spirit of our Report and the friendly co-operation, mutual esteem, confidence and reliance, which made that Report possible had been kept steadfastly in view, the later history of India would have been materially different.

On 7 January 1924, I wrote to Santanam, Secretary of the Committee:

I have started with the printing of the entire evidence. I had considerable difficulty in inducing the Presses here to undertake the work; some of them were afraid of taking up the job for fear of offending the Government; others thought that they would have to run hopelessly against time. At last, I have persuaded a well-known Press here to take up the work and finish it on or before the 20th of January.

I am not taking up any work in Court at present and I am devoting myself entirely to this work with such assistance as some of my friends here have promised to give me ungrudgingly.

I am sorry to have to point out again that the copies of the statements supplied to me for final disposal have not been carefully arranged. You can realise the inconvenience I am feeling here at this distance in not having accurate copies of the matter to be sent to the Press

On 27 January 1920 I wrote in similar strain to Girdharilal of Punjab who had interested himself in the work. After mentioning visits to several important men in Bombay who did not prove useful in getting the printing done, my letter stated as follows:

It is somewhat humiliating repeatedly to call on these big men and if public service involves such humiliation, men of a certain temperament must keep out of it.

I have, therefore, decided to distribute the remaining work amongst three or four small Presses. All these Presses put together cannot give me enough formes every day, but I must say that these smaller Presses are showing great spirit and energy.

The delay in sending material to me from Lahore is very vexatious and causes me a lot of worry. Nearly the whole day is spent in examining the proofs, as they come in, from four to five quarters but my friends who are assisting me have proved worthy of my reliance and we are working even after midnight every day to cope with the work. So far I have avoided employing any paid agency except for typing the copies.

I really repent taking up this work of preparing the record finally and seeing it through the Press in Bombay. The inaccuracy and incompleteness of the record, the difficulties of printing, the delays at Lahore and the unmethodical output of the few Presses who have given their help, have caused me immense worry, but now that I have taken up the work I am afraid I must go through it at any cost, perhaps a wiser man.

Please do not disturb the big men mentioned in your letter. I am content to work with the aid of humbler friends whose loyalty and willingness can be relied upon.

On 8 March 1920 Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to me:

I notice from the papers that Santanam [Secretary] has been hasty enough to announce that our Report will be published on the 16th. I doubt this very much.

Perhaps it will be desirable to issue the Report to the Press even before the bound copies are ready for sale to the public. The sooner the Report comes out the better and I should like the papers to deal with it as soon as possible. It would be desirable if two copies were sent to all the Indian Dailies. I trust something has been done about the cable to England. K. C. Roy of the Associated Press has promised to send everything we may send him without charging us much. The draft may be sent to K. C. Roy before the Report is issued, so that it may reach England about the time our Report is published here.

On 10 March 1920 Gandhi wrote to me from Sabarmati Ashram:

I sent you the balance from Amritsar and the bulk from Lahore. I have endeavoured to go through everything as carefully as possible. I have considered all the suggestions you made on the margin and incorporated those that I thought fit could be so treated. Please let me know what progress is being made. Shall we be ready for the 16th of April?

On the next day, the 11th of March, Gandhi wrote again to me:

By the courtesy of the Postal authorities I am able to send you now the whole batch, i.e. up to 24. You will please note where I have made any addition in the second batch. I hope to send you a fairly big batch.

On the same day came another letter from Gandhi:

I send you some more today. Enough to satisfy me. The fact is I am now played out and I find that the revision work is most taxing. I have not had rest tonight.

I am anxious to make the work as thorough as I can.

A third letter came from Gandhi on the same day. This had a reference to the question whether there was enough evidence to support the view that Dyer had laid a trap to drive the people into the Jallianwala enclosure with the view of giving them condign punishment. Motilal, Das and I were of opinion that there was enough evidence to justify our mentioning the matter in our Report. Gandhi violently differed from our view:

I have carefully studied Mr. Das's summary of evidence and the suggested addendum. I thought that he was going to put together the evidence of specific witnesses and enable me to study their statements. In any event, the summary before me leaves me not only unconvinced but a discussion along the lines suggested can only mar the Report which in my opinion is otherwise convincing. The points marshalled by Mr. Das appear to me like so many loose staples which will not hang together. I want them like bricks cohering and making a roadway for you to walk to your goal. Much as I would like to discuss the suggested theory as such in the Report, I cannot do it unless I have *prima facie* evidence.

In arranging a discussion you please study the thing yourself and if you think otherwise I would have you to marshal the evidence on this point and discuss the theory. I would sign what you write provided that you go no further than Mr. Das has done. He has left it to us two. I do not want you to yield to my reasoning. What seems to me to be loose, may appear coherent to you. I would gladly yield to you if you take a different view. I would conciliate Mr. Das if he can convince any one of us. If you consider the matter of sufficient importance for consultation, please come down for discussion. Will you please send this to Mr. Das with your remarks.

On 13 March 1920 I wrote to Gandhi:

The printing of the Report has been going on very slowly. Though you are quite regular in sending your daily quotas of the draft, the Press is very slack and is causing a lot of worry. Unfortunately for the last two days I have been down with Influenza and am strictly advised by my Doctor to rest in bed, but that won't prevent my going over your drafts in bed whenever I have the necessary strength.

I understand that you will be in Bombay on Monday next. If I am all right then and allowed to move out of bed, I shall certainly see you to decide finally about Mr. Das's views about the trap at Jallianwala.

On 13 March Gandhi wrote to me:

I have made an attempt to finish today but could not. Any way, I hope I have not kept the compositors waiting.

I see a note in the margin about Kasur but I must tone down the remarks about the crowd's behaviour. I have not been able to do so. Every word I have written is justifiable but you may wish to take the responsibility of altering where I do not see my way clear. The Kasur crowd acted most mischievously and we must make that clear admission.

On the same day Gandhi wrote again to me:

I am sending you a very poor batch today but I think I have already sent enough for the compositors to cope with. I must finish tomorrow even if I have to keep awake the whole of the night.

And later he wrote again:

Thank God! I am sending the last. Please read everything very carefully.

I am sorry to hear from Dr. Parashram that you were ailing.

On 14 March, I wrote to Gandhi an important letter:

I enclose for your perusal a copy of my letter to the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya. The letter will speak for itself and will make clear to you on what lines my thoughts have been working as I am lying in bed. I am very keen about both of you going to England and you will agree that your experience of English public life, your familiarity with the English temper will be the greatest asset in our endeavours. I am looking up to you to cast your vote in favour of inducing Malaviya to cross the "kala pani" and that you can successfully do if you decide to go yourself. I am aware of the inconvenience to which such a step will subject your frail body or what you were pleased to call at our last interview with Mr. Jinnah, your dilapidated body, but I feel certain that you will be accompanied by some younger men, who ought to make it their duty to surround you with the conveniences your life has become accustomed to. I have no doubt of any kind whatever of the success of our case if you champion it in England by your presence on the spot. Your name means grit and yet moderation and these two virtues are eminently wanted for our success in this hard struggle. Kindly excuse this letter.

With profound respects,

On 18 March 1920 I wrote to Jawaharlal:

It was in anticipation of all this as stated above that I wanted you to divide the work with me and get the Report printed at Allahabad under your personal supervision. That would have been an ideal way. Thank God, however, the worry will be finished in about five days more and I shall then breathe more freely. I have emerged out of this publication business a much wiser man. The way in which the whole evidence was dumped upon me by the Lahore office in the crudest English, bad tying, incoherent and illegible spelling, misspelt names, perplexing blanks, incoherent references, contrary alterations, was a lesson in itself and I am sure that if Mr. Santanam and his staff had taken more care to co-operate with greater method and intelligence, my task would have been very much easier and the work more finished and accurate. However, I am not sorry for having gone through the experience, for it has revealed what colossal improvement must be made in our methods, neatness, accuracy, despatch, devotion and kindred other qualities, before our public work can come up to the proper standard.

Jawaharlal replied on 20 March 1920:

The account of all your troubles and worries makes me feel guilty. I wish I could have helped you in the matter.
With kind regards,

On 23 March 1920 I wired to Santanam:

Report finished. Publication Friday. Copies delivered Associated Press. Sending you a dozen tomorrow.

Gandhi's wire to me later:

Congratulations. Reaching tomorrow. Hope all right.

Sarala Devi Chaudhararani wrote to me on 31 March 1920, from Sabarmati, on behalf of Gandhi:

Will you kindly write to Santanam directly. Mr. Gandhi is anxious to know your decision about your going to England in the deputation. He hopes to be in Bombay on the 5th or 6th. Hoping this finds you quite strong.

My participation in this great National work was, throughout, most cordial and inspiring. Important and responsible work was placed in my hands from time to time. I have already referred to Gandhi's cordial invitation that I should alone visit England on behalf of the Congress, to obtain support for our Report on the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. My contact with Gandhi during this period was so extraordinary, full of such tenderness and cordiality, that I responded readily to the invitation of a Bombay Marathi Daliy, the *Indu Prakash*, to express my estimate about him and his methods of work as I had come to know them. I quote below what I wrote on that occasion in the issue of that paper of 29 March 1920:

My contact with Gandhi, though of short duration, had been fairly intimate in connection with the work which we did together for some months on the Punjab Committee of the Congress. What struck me most, during this time, was pre-eminently the fact that Gandhi was so different from our accepted notions of a "Politician". The deep-seated modesty, restraint, asceticism, simplicity, refinement and culture, that were so distinctive of Gandhi, had unfortunately not become a part of the accepted connotation of the word "politician"; though I was certain that as politics spreads amongst sterner characters, such

an evolution was inevitable. His wonderful grasp of the human element in every situation with which he is faced, his innate sense of proportion, his fearlessness and his trust in human beneficence saved him very often from many extreme situations to which another person with his woeful experiences would have ere long succumbed. His early contact with the better mind of England must have been intimate and regular, either through books or by personal association, for, in spite of the present deterioration of British administrative ideals, Gandhi succeeded in maintaining, almost unshaken, his faith in British justice and liberalism.

He shows the discipline of a person who has gone through the richer experience of life and realised for himself the relative worthlessness of life's good things; no pinchbeck renunciation born of a feeling of satiety, as is often the case. The mind is unique that has learned to combine asceticism with worldly refinement and wisdom, and the value of this combination is immeasurably high, when truth, sincerity, courage, and shrewdness enter into its formation. It seemed to me that Gandhi's aim—and he feels sure of accomplishing it if Providence spares him sufficiently long—is to infuse, into our dusty politics, truthfulness, purity and charity; truthfulness that delights in exposing our favourite weaknesses; purity that abhors the adoption of expediency and casuistry and charity that does not disdain to admit the difficulties besetting the work of our political opponents.

I still remember his voice, frail up to breaking point, when he addressed an important sitting of the Subjects Committee of the Amritsar Congress on the resolution condemning the excesses of the mob at some cities in the Punjab. I felt as if a new light was being shed on political problems, a new weapon furnished with which to wield our destiny. His sincerity is often iconoclastic and it frequently takes a shape which weaker men may call unpatriotic. To him, truth appears to be greater than patriotism and, even for the sake of his country, he abhors the unclean sacrifice of euphemism or sophistry.

This is a new lesson, for which some of the younger men will surround him with admiration. It is new in this sense that a large number of present day politicians appear to have discarded it as a practical principle of political life, in the sincere belief that political life is a game played with rules which are divorced from all that we regard as sacred and just in ordinary life. Political life is to Gandhi only an extension of domestic life, governed by the same ideals of truth, justice, fearlessness, love, generosity and refinement. Just as they ennoble our daily life, they are to him the mainsprings of political action. Political life would, according to him, be snobbery and chicanery without these virtues and he appears to be painfully aware of the prevalence of such snobbery in the country, cloaked under diverse forms and shapes of varying attractiveness. He appears to have convinced himself that, but for this blight, our cause would be juster

and more irresistible. This is Gandhi's great service to the political world and, speaking for a large section of the younger men, as far as I can understand their minds, our veneration is his and will continue to be so, as long as his ideals maintain the stern purity and justice which are at present associated with his name.

In the middle of June 1920 happened an incident indicating the same trust and goodwill, as I had experienced during the Punjab days, when the All India Congress Committee passed the resolution reproduced below.

On 5 June 1920 Gokaran Nath Misra, Joint General Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, wrote to me:

I am forced to give you trouble, but I am sure you will not mind it. At a meeting of the A.I.C.C. held the other day at Benares, it was resolved that a petition should be sent to Parliament embodying our recommendations and views on the Punjab tragedy. A Sub-Committee was appointed to draft a petition, consisting of the following members:

Mr. M. R. Jayakar
 Mr. M. K. Gandhi
 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya
 Mr. C. R. Das
 Lala Lajpat Rai
 Pandit Motilal Nehru
 Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra (Convenor)

Pandit Motilalji especially asked me to request you earnestly to draft the petition. Panditji was of opinion that you, having worked on the Commission appointed by the Punjab Enquiry Committee, and knowing, as you do, fully all the salient facts of the Punjab question, it would be most appropriate if you should kindly draft the petition. I can quite see what amount of strain and time this drafting will mean for you, but I trust that you will not hesitate to do it. As this is a very urgent matter and we should lose no time in submitting the petition to Parliament, I request that you will be kind enough to draft it and send it on to me at your earliest convenience and oblige.

The Resolution of the A. I. C. C. mentioned in this letter was:

That a petition be presented to Parliament on the subject of the Punjab tragedy and that Parliament be requested to take immediate steps to institute proceedings, by way of impeachment or otherwise, to bring Sir Michael O'Dwyer to justice in respect of his oppressive regime in the Punjab and especially for his responsibility in connection with the events of 1919 in the Punjab.

That Parliament be requested to take such steps as are necessary

to place General Dyer and others mentioned in the resolution before His Majesty's Court of Justice in Great Britain for the cruelties committed by them in April-May 1919 in the Punjab.

The A.I.C.C. desires to place on record its profound disappointment with the report of the majority of the Hunter Committee on the events of the last year in the Punjab and elsewhere and its complete dissent from their principal findings and recommendations.

That the A.I.C.C. records its opinion that the enquiry conducted by the Hunter Committee was incomplete, one-sided and unsatisfactory, by reason of the refusal to grant the necessary facilities asked for by the Congress Sub-Committee to enable it to tender evidence, thereby shutting out the evidence of the very leaders of the Punjab, whose acts, among other things, the Committee was called upon to investigate.

Unfortunately I had to decline this request for the following among other reasons:

I regret that I cannot undertake the work of drafting the petition. I am all spent up and feel so jaded about the Punjab topic, owing to the hourly contacts maintained with it during the last five months, and it is impossible for my mind to recover freshness of view about the subject for some time yet. The very words Jallianwala Bagh have become an obsession. If you so desire, however, I would prepare a skeleton draft, which might afterwards be shaped into proper form by the Committee appointed by the A.I.C.C.

This cordiality between other Congress leaders and myself remained throughout undisturbed but for an incident which happened towards the close of our contact. As the true facts of this incident have so long remained in darkness and were, even then, known to very few persons, it would not be inappropriate briefly to place some of them before the public. The gravity of this incident was then heightened by the action of a section of the Press in Bombay, then under the control of some unscrupulous journalists, who, throughout their career, never lost an opportunity of maligning public men, who had, however unwittingly, crossed their path at some time or other in their public career.

The true facts relating to this incident are that, as stated above, a fund of about Rs. 5,00,000 had been collected, chiefly through the efforts of Malaviyaji, for the purpose of giving relief in the matter of the Punjab massacre. It was an *ad hoc* collection and remained in the custody of Jehangir Petit in Bombay. With the sanction of the Congress sub-committee, I

drew, out of this fund, a sum of Rs. 50,000 and spent the bulk of it on the preparation and publication of the evidence and report of the Congress sub-committee on the Jallianwala Bagh incident. Not a pie out of this large sum of Rs. 50,000, however, was paid to anyone, like the volunteers—about thirty in number, who helped me from week to week for several months to prepare for publication the evidence and the report of the Committee. Even the expenses of their refreshment from day to day during all this period were borne by my wife and cost the Congress Committee not a penny. It may be mentioned that some Congressmen in Bombay were at this time carrying on most intensive agitation (in which I did not participate because I held adverse views on the question) asking students to leave schools and colleges and join the non-co-operation movement. After, however, the first enthusiasm was over, the students who had responded to this call discovered that they had ruined their careers and asked for relief from the Congress leaders. When, however, the students discovered that these leaders were both unwilling and unable to give the students any relief, many of them approached me for relief. Some of these cases I discovered were extremely destitute and distressful. The balance in my hand out of the funds originally provided, was about Rs. 4,385 and it lay idle for over four years and when this dire need arose I paid out of it several sums from time to time, to relieve the pressing needs of these poor and helpless students during the years 1920 to 1925. After paying these amounts a small balance of about Rs. 1,248 remained in my hands.

During all these years, the All-India Congress Committee remained completely dormant but it suddenly woke up and passed a resolution claiming this fund as owner. It called upon me to restore the whole amount in my hands (Rs. 4,385). I pointed out my legal doubts about the ownership of this *ad hoc* fund claimed by the A. I. C. C. and I added further that some of the amount in my hands had been spent by me, during the somnolence of the A. I. C. C. for five years, to relieve the distress directly caused by the agitation of the Congress leaders. At the same time, despite this legal objection, I offered to pay and sent a cheque for the unexpended balance in my hands (about Rs. 1,240).

On 30 April 1925, i.e. five years after the fund had been collected and utilised, I received a letter from Jawaharlal

Nehru as Secretary of the A. I. C. C., requesting me to pay the amount standing in my name and adding, in very polite terms, that if I did so my action would help him in collecting other sums similarly outstanding with some of the prominent members of the Congress. As his letter was not clear as to what amount he desired to have, whether the actual unexpended balance in my hands or the entire amount remaining after expenses of publication, I asked for clarification and offered to pay whatever he in his judgment thought was duly claimable. He very kindly offered to place the matter before the Congress Working Committee, but I wrote back that that was not necessary and I would abide by his decision in the matter. In the course of inquiries, however, I discovered that the A. I. C. C. desired to have this amount for the purpose of meeting the expenses of the election propaganda of the Swaraj Party, which was then only one of the political parties in the Congress. I took the view and I thought rightly that the Malaviya fund had been collected from the general public and not only from Congressmen and was definitely for the purpose of relieving distress caused by the Jallianwala Bagh incident. It was therefore doubtful whether, with this assurance to the public, it was legal for the A. I. C. C. to utilise the balance of that fund for expenses of their election propaganda, a purpose very remote from the original one for which the fund had been collected from the public. I, therefore, felt justified in raising this legal point, while offering to pay whatever Jawaharlal Nehru thought it right to demand. I made this point clear in my letters of 3 May 1925 and 26 August 1926.

In my letter dated 26 August 1926 addressed to the Under Secretary of the A. I. C. C., I declined to accept the Congress claim on the ground that the Congress having become a handmaid of the Swaraj Party, this fund could not be legally utilised for the purpose of party propaganda. I replied that that the fund had been originally intended not for party purposes like those which have now been undertaken by the A. I. C. C. I added:

I have consulted Pandit Malaviya at whose instance the money was put into my hands out of a fund collected at his initiative in Bombay in 1919 expressly for the relief of the persons injured in the Punjab massacre. Malaviya assured me that he held a very large amount in

his hand, being a balance of similar funds collected in other parts of India.

Under these circumstances I regretted that I could not accept the Congress claim:

Things were different when the Congress was an all-India body where every political party had a proper place and had not become the captive and handmaid of a small political group like the Swaraj Party.

Correspondence then ensued ending with a letter from Jawaharlal dated 4 July 1928, in which, after explaining the delay in claiming the amount, he requested me not to raise the legal question (as he said), "As you have been good enough to agree to pay the full amount." He added "that the matter had been pending for a number of years now [for no fault of mine] you will agree with me I hope that this is hardly a satisfactory state of affairs."

In the meanwhile, Jawaharlal made a statement at Calcutta which was seized by a section of the Press to throw mud at me, which was their favourite game in Bombay. So I sent a telegram to Jawaharlal and Motilal Nehru as follows:

Press Report of Jawaharlal's statement in Calcutta concerning balance in my hand of Punjab Relief Fund distorted by hostile papers in Bombay affecting my honour. I was therefore compelled to issue a brief statement to the Press explaining the true facts.

My statement to the Press, mentioned in the above telegram, narrated the true facts and denied the allegation made by the hostile Press that I had accepted liability only for a part of the amount and repudiated responsibility for the balance. I added that I had raised no difficulty and had agreed to pay the whole amount as demanded by Jawaharlal and that it was totally untrue (as alleged by the hostile Press) that either any portion of the sum was retained by me or that I had declined responsibility for any part thereof.

The matter hung like this for several months, till Jawaharlal sent me a telegram on 10 January 1929:

Regret incorrect reports. Awaiting your letter.

This was followed by a Press statement issued by Jawaharlal on 13 January 1929 as follows:

So far as the sum due from Mr. Jayakar is concerned, the facts have been correctly stated by himself in his statement to the Press. The balance in his hand from the Punjab Relief Fund was about Rs. 1,305. This was not claimed by the A.I.C.C. for five years till 1925. Mr. Jayakar then stated that he had expended a part of this amount in public charity. But he agreed to send to the A.I.C.C. the whole amount due from him. The statement in the Press that a sum of Rs. 6,000 was due from him and that he accepted the liability for Rs. 3,000 only is incorrect. I regret that incorrect statements have been issued with regard to this matter and this had led to unjustified inferences.

Motilal Nehru followed with a letter to me on 16 January 1929 as follows:

Jawaharlal has issued a statement bearing out every word of what you said in yours. I hope you are quite satisfied. Half of our worries are caused by incorrect Press reports. I hope you will be in Delhi in time to listen to the lecture of Irwin. I expect to arrive on the morning of the 27th as I have called party meeting for that afternoon.

On 13 January 1929 Jawaharlal wrote to me:

I am very sorry that the Associated Press of India issued an entirely distorted report of what happened at the A.I.C.C. meeting in Calcutta. I had myself not seen it; or else I would have corrected it earlier. The statement you have issued to the Press is entirely correct. I am also issuing a statement to the A.P.I. and to various other papers. The question of arrears was raised rather suddenly at the A.I.C.C. meeting. It was not on the agenda. But I had to give an immediate reply. I had to speak from memory. But I am sure that I did not say what the A.P.I. had made me say. I am sorry that any words of mine should have given to some people a handle to attack you. The statement of accounts you have sent together with your letter is correct excepting a small error of a few annas.

But in the meanwhile, the Press had not been inactive. It was a strange experience that after all the work I had done free of cost for the Indian National Congress, spending six months of my time and my own money, the Press still continued to agitate until on 4 January 1930 I was compelled to write to the Federated Press of India the following letter:

Mr. Jayakar's attention has been drawn by a kind friend to your editorial article of the 25th December 1929 in which you severely comment on his conduct on the assumption that the Congress money

is due from him on account of the Punjab Relief Fund. In that connection Mr. Jayakar would like to inform you that the money had been paid long ago, but if it has not been acknowledged in the Congress report it is due to dilatoriness of the Congress authority.

The attack of the Federated Press dated 25 December 1929 to which my statement was a reply was as follows:

The auditor's report gives these amounts as due up to 1925. Later on, the default in payment has become universal and chronic. Unofficially we find that large sums of money are due from various individuals and balances remaining in their hands of the Punjab Relief Fund. Among the persons who are mentioned in the report we find Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Mr. J. B. Petit. If the facts are true, no language in condemnation of these gentlemen can be too strong. If the facts are untrue, the General Secretary deserves the severest reprobation for bringing a grave gratuitous charge against men of such position in public life as Mr. Jayakar.

On 4 January 1930 I wrote to Jawaharlal referring to this attack of the Federated Press and regretting that the controversy was still being kept alive by a section of the Press.

In reply to my letter Jawaharlal wrote on 11 January 1930 as follows:

I am in receipt of your letter. I am indeed sorry that newspapers should continue to harp over our accounts. The fault is not that of our Office. As a matter of fact, there is no mention of your name in any of our accounts this year. Probably the editor of the Paper had got hold of last year's accounts. Anyhow I am writing to him on the subject.

Accordingly the General Secretary of the Congress wrote to the Editor of *Federated India* on 11 January 1930. After giving the history of the Punjab Relief Fund, the General Secretary sent the Editor the audited statement of accounts. His letter went on to observe:

You make aspersions in regard to certain aspects of Congress financial administration and the conduct of General Secretaries. This is a very serious charge that you have made and I think you ought to find ways either to substantiate this or to withdraw it. I shall be glad to have an early reply from you giving me some of the grounds which made

you cast these aspersions. In the event of your not being able to substantiate these charges, I hope you will have the courtesy to withdraw these charges and insinuations publicly.

This is how the mischievous activity of the Press and the dilatoriness of the Congress terminated. My last letter to Jawaharlal on 25 January 1930 was as follows:

I thank you for your letter of the 11th and the contradictions it contains with reference to the controversy over our accounts.

Thus terminated a controversy which, for the moment, convulsed Bombay's hostile papers and caused me considerable irritation at the fact that my services to the Congress at my own cost of time and money had been so ill repaid. I did not, however, allow this unfortunate incident to disturb the cordiality between me and the prominent Congress leaders with whom I was working at this time.

One effect of my participation in this national work was that I formed some lifelong friendships, which endured right up to the disappearing of these friends from our midst. It was a great opportunity to see these friends at work, all of whom have left indelible marks on the fortunes of our country.

To begin with there was C. R. Das, with his large ideas, welling emotion, burning patriotism, and indifference to wealth. He was an attractive figure. I have never seen a person with whom money counted for so little. I have seen patriots who value their money, though with a reputation to the contrary; but Das was so singular. I was told of an incident by one of his near relatives, when, during the days he was earning a large income, he went with a family party on a cruise on one of the Bengal rivers. It lasted for several weeks. When it was about to end, he was asked what was to be done with the balance of money which remained unspent at the end of the cruise. He said, "Give it to the Captain, who has attended to our comforts." It was pointed out that the balance went into four figures. Das said, "Never mind, give it to the Captain, let him have a little enjoyment in the same way that we have enjoyed the cruise."

This was quite characteristic of Das. I can recall several instances of his perfect freedom from covetousness or cautious thrift. My contact with him during those days led to a warm

and intimate friendship and I saw more of him in later years when he and his wife came to Bombay and stayed with me. His politics were of a rational and constructive type. He hated British rule, as most of us did, but his ideas about its Indian substitute were sound and practical. He courted great unpopularity on one occasion when in his speech at Faridpur (2 May 1925) he stood out, openly and publicly, for the benefits which India would secure by remaining with the British Commonwealth of Nations.

He fumed with impatience on learning that Reading's offer in 1919 of immediate provincial autonomy as a price for stopping the agitation for boycotting the visit to India of the then Prince of Wales had been turned down. He had large and valued friendships amongst the British. I know of a couple of old-fashioned British bureaucrats who had a great personal fondness for Das, and referred to him in the endearing and familiar name of "Chitto". He had an extensive criminal practice, in the course of which his knowledge of human infirmities grew. It made him tolerant of human weaknesses, and gave him an insight into the working of the Government machine in upcountry districts *vis-à-vis* the poor man.

He did not dislike the British personally or as a race, as I have seen some types do. His hatred was for their system of government. In this behalf he resembled Gandhi, though he was not such a friend of the British as Gandhi was. He had a horror of replacing the white with a brown bureaucracy. His conceptions of Indian Home Rule were critical and inclusive of a democratic broadening out of popular freedom and liberty. In securing and maintaining power, he was often inclined to be intolerant and autocratic or, as his enemies in Bengal said, indiscriminating and devious. The Party Machine which he created for his use in the Bengal Legislature was, his critics averred, lubricated freely with undue patronage and unabashed nepotism and he wielded his extensive powers often on the principle of the end justifying the means. This was more so, they said, after his accession to the Mayoralty of Calcutta. His followers always evinced a commendable regard and reverence for him, and he trusted them implicitly—an admirable feature wanting in some other 'patriots' who rose to similar civic distinction in other parts of India. He had a great capacity for begging and had such rich followers

in Bengal that, on one occasion, in the course of a few hours, he could obtain no less than Rs. 150,000, to finance a paper which he then intended to bring out.

His attitude towards Bengal Moslems was very friendly; but many of his critics doubted whether this feeling arose purely from a sense of political expediency or was genuine in its inspiration. He once entered into a pact with Bengal Moslems, which gave that community, what his critics thought, a great deal more than their due. It was certainly more unbalanced than the much maligned Poona Pact with Ambedkar. There was a howl of condemnation against it, and ultimately it was rejected by a large majority in an open session of a Nationalist Conference. It is no doubt true that many of his Moslem friends who, during his life time professed fealty to him and his ideals and thereby rose to distinction beyond their deserts by an open avowal of nationalist sympathies, became, after his death, bitter communal extremists. It is difficult to say whether this metamorphosis was due to the absence of the lubricants, so freely employed during his time, or was the result of a natural reaction against the friendly era, short-lived as it was, which he had inaugurated by his personal influence.

He was a magnificent talker, well grounded in ancient Hindu history. In his emotion, he was a typical Bengali, and could rise to heights which often reminded me of some aspects of the life of Chaitanya, the Saint of Bengal. In his early years, he developed a talent for writing poems, and, I am told, some of his early efforts in this direction could rival very favourably the writings of Tagore, of whose writing he was super-critical. He was passionately fond of Indian music, which, unlike many of his political colleagues, he understood very well. I often played to him when he lived with me in Bombay, and there were not a few moments when, with tears in his eyes, he mutely listened to the soft notes of Indian *rāgas*. His cultural conception of India was sound and he looked forward to the creation of an era of blended culture, in which Hindu and Moslem, Brahman and non-Brahman, Aryan and Dravidian, each brought into the common output his quota to enrich the growth of a national culture and refinement.

His views on social reform were liberal, and his attitude towards women's rights tolerant, if not enthusiastic. Alto-

gether, I always felt that Das, in another age, with greater freedom to achieve his ideals, unmeshed in the maelstrom of party politics, would have been the centre of a great movement, not unlike what a couple of his religious predecessors had created in Bengal. His fearlessness and sacrifice would then have met with a far larger and more generous response than he received during his life-time.

In strong contrast with Das, there was Motilal Nehru, with a different personality. Careful, cautious, with emotions trained and under control, very little impulsive exuberance, and large supply of worldly experience and wisdom; he was often the antithesis of Das. Many occasions could be recalled when friendly differences arose between these two, but none was more characteristic than when they quarrelled (for it was nothing less), over the resolution relating to Gopinath Saha's murder of an English official. At one stage of the controversy they very nearly fell out. Das was moved by emotion in that matter more than by reason, and Motilal refused to be drawn into compliance with what he called rabid sentiment.

This incident was truly characteristic of the difference between the two men, each great and lovable in his own way. Those who later on saw Motilal leading the Swaraj Party in the Central Legislature, could recall many incidents when his practical wisdom and cool levelheadedness, often cloaked under unfamiliar devices, saved his party from situations which would otherwise have caused the destruction of their prestige with their opponents.

I can recall a singular instance of such practical wisdom. I was then the deputy leader of the Nationalist Party, in the Legislative Assembly, next in rank to Lajpat Rai, who was then in command. A question arose as regards our party supporting a motion, tabled by a member of Motilal's Party, for a cut in the sale price of salt. Some members of my Party were of the opinion that the proposed reduction in the salt tax per maund was undesirable. They held that, however iniquitous the Salt Act might have been at one time, it had been digested by the country and that any tinkering with the rate of the tax would not benefit the consumer so much as the middleman. Ultimately, it was decided that I should see Motilal and find out from him what the attitude of his Party would be with reference to the cut motion. I saw him

at his residence. He said, "Well, you see, my own opinion is that we should not disturb the Salt Act now, but I realise that, as a popular Party, we cannot oppose the motion, nor even remain neutral. Personally, my own opinion is that we should not tinker with the Salt Act." I said, "Your views surprise me. Supposing you were the Prime Minister, as you would be some day, I am sure, will you keep the Salt Act going?" He said, "Yes, it produces about six crores of revenue, and I would not like to forego this source of income." I said, "But what about Gandhi? You know he is dead opposed to the Salt Act; he is sure to start satyagraha against your Government, for you know Gandhi is wedded to principles and is not a respecter of persons. I am sure," I added, "that if your Government publicly maintained the Salt Tax, Gandhi would start satyagraha against you, with greater vigour than against a foreign Government."

Motilal laughed derisively and said, "Do you think Gandhi would organise such agitation against my Government?" I said, "Yes." "Well, all I can say," said Motilal, "is that in that case my Government would take Gandhi to a place where this Government dare not take him." We both laughed, and I returned to my Party meeting and we decided to join Motilal in supporting the cut. In all the variety of sensational occasions through which he led his Party with such success, his practical sense, stern level-headedness and worldly wisdom never forsook him. It was deplorable that he never got, during his time, a chance of forming the Government, for I feel certain that his regime would have been courageous and firm, dealing with Indian problems with a tact, vision and steadfastness which would have surprised many of his colleagues and even his opponents, who knew him as the Leader of the Opposition. His great characteristic, which he ever maintained in any complex situation to which he was subjected, was that he was always wide-awake. He never lost his equipoise, never made a mistake of judgment. Cold, calculating, precise, unimpulsive, with a thorough knowledge of men and a capacity to awe them into submission, he made an admirable leader. He had an unrivalled talent for suffering fools gladly. He also knew how to check sternly their outbursts. As the leader of the Swaraj Party, and a close associate of Gandhi and his co-workers, he had infinite opportunities of exercising this capacity. When Gandhi began

his march from Dandi in the early part of the year 1930, Motilal was openly sceptical of the efficacy of the march and of the salt manufacturing activity. Nobody could perhaps recall more instances than his Congress associates, of the cool and balanced advice he often gave them in their secret conclaves.

Unlike Das, he had not much capacity for spreading friendliness amongst his co-workers. I can recall one or two notable instances of men who, while he was in power, whined, whimpered or cajoled him, but who were waiting vigilantly for a chance to throw him out of the saddle, and created difficulties to unseat him from his position. His way of dealing with such secret rebels was to isolate them, sometimes by promotion to a place where they ceased to be mischievous. In the Legislature he was a powerful personality; his position gave him this power, but he had not many gifts of Parliamentary debate or leadership. He had many opportunities of showing such gifts in the course of his career, but perhaps his inborn cynicism and general distrust of human goodness stood in the way of his ascendancy in this field. Whenever he spoke in the Legislative Assembly, it was distilled sense and reason. Even when he let out pyrotechnics, they rose from *terra-firma* and came back to *terra-firma*. He rarely lived in the air. He often humoured his followers, but none knew better than he where the truth lay. He had limited capacity for going with the crowd, though his loyalty to his Party was admirable. He enjoyed vast patronage, but never used it indiscriminately, but dispensed it with dignity unrivalled amongst his colleagues. He often entered the Legislature while a debate was on, and proceeded, with measured and dignified steps, to occupy his esteemed seat on the Opposition Benches, all eyes resting on him. In all that he did, his innate dignity and self-confidence were his unique attributes. His knowledge of men was sound, though his judgment inclined at times to be affected by vindictive resentment. He had a great circle of admirers on the Government Benches who retained their fondness for him despite his tirades against them. Some secret affinity appeared to exist between them, born perhaps of the power to rule and govern men, by a commanding personality. He made an admirable talker at a dinner. On such occasions, he rarely allowed his political antipathies to stand in the way of his making himself a most

charming companion.

I can recall an unforgettable instance of this at a dinner in Delhi, at the house of a British member of the Viceroy's Council. It was the first occasion when we attended an official's dinner, breaking through the social boycott of such functions—which departure was due mainly to the extreme popularity of the official host. Motilal and I happened to be fellow guests, with a third Indian, a secret critic of Motilal, though apparently a friend. Motilal sat opposite to me between two charming companions, both British, and highly placed in the social scale of Delhi life. He talked on, and the dinner was prolonged to a very late hour. Everyone was waiting for Motilal to finish his enlivening talk with his two neighbours, but apparently Motilal's conversation proved too irresistible, and the conversation waxed. Ultimately we rose when it was past midnight. This Indian friend of Motilal, a member of his Party, walked up to me and jocularly remarked, "Apparently Motilal got this chance of talking to charming English ladies after a lot of social starvation in the Swaraj Party." Before I could explain, Motilal walked up and guessed what the criticism was about, and, with suppressed irony in his tone but with a smile on his lips, remarked, "Yes, a lot is to be forgiven to a man who has borne with riff-raff for well-nigh three years." I need not add that this remark froze his friend completely. His fascinating personality and caustic wit would have made him a popular leader on the Government Benches. I have often heard the British official bloc in the Legislative Assembly dismiss Motilal with the comment, "Oh, Motilal, he is so different, he is a 'Burrasab' like us, we can understand him though we do not agree." This was not intended to be unfriendly comment, but showed a lively appreciation of the many gifts of commanding leadership which Motilal possessed which were shared by few of his Party colleagues.

He had a wonderful gift of looking refined in whatever dress he wore. I believe that most of the stories one heard of his getting his linen washed in Paris and his Sauterne from France were apocryphal. Still, he had the marvellous power of accepting the richest hospitality with the quiet composure of a person accustomed to it. The choicest wine and the richest fruit rarely moved Motilal to exuberance and he would rise from the daintiest meal with the quiet self

possession of a person accustomed to enjoy the choicest gifts of life as if they were merely his due.

My first sight of Motilal was under extraordinary circumstances. It was at the Grand Hotel in Chowringhee in Calcutta where I had put up. I was then a regular visitor to the annual Congress session which, in that year, was held in Calcutta. At dinner time, I got into the dining room of the hotel where select men and women used to flock in those days during the Christmas season. I saw in the centre of the room a magnificent table, beautifully decorated, laid for a dozen persons; a number of attendants, in spick and span livery, waiting for the guests to arrive. I was curious to know who was the illustrious host. After ten minutes, in walked Motilal immaculately dressed in evening clothes, followed by the charming members of his family and later by a few British men and women. When they had dispersed themselves at the table excellently paired, the attention of the entire Dining Room was on this central attraction. Everyone wondered who the host was at this admirable group, Indian and British, so uncommon in those days of mutual isolation. I made inquiries and learned that it was the great lawyer of Allahabad, Motilal Nehru, the doyen of his profession and the favourite of the Bench. The very next day, I had my first opportunity of talking to him at a dinner given to the Indian Delegates by some Bengali celebrities. I was charmed with him and his son. I could hardly then picture Motilal as leading the Swaraj Party of the future, clad in khaddar. Talking of khaddar, he alone knew how to wear it. The tilt in his khaddar cap, as it sat on his ample forehead, made his khaddar look different from that of other wearers. It could easily be said of him that whatever he wore he turned into pashmina. I once asked him the secret of this trick, and with laughter he remarked, "You have to be born a Kashmiri to know this, a rugged Maratha like you can hardly understand this business."

Later, I knew Motilal as a frequent guest. On one occasion he was staying with me when my colleagues of the Responsive Co-operation Party were severely criticizing him at public meetings every evening in Bombay, during the temporary rebellion they had started against Motilal and his dominant rule. Every evening an obliging friend of Motilal's and mine, an over-active lady, came and accurately reported to Motilal

the choicest vocabulary in political invective, which my colleagues of the Responsive Party had been showering on his devoted head, by way of reprisal against equally violent attacks made on them by Motilal's associates. Such a communication was unnecessary, and I am sure that the lady meant it merely as a piece of gossip. But it had a provocative effect on Motilal and, after hearing of a particularly violent attack one evening, he walked up to me and said, "Well, you see, I cannot continue to be your guest when your friends are treating me like this." I said "Why not? You know that my friends are only imitating the methods of your Party, but may I say that, though pressed, I have refused either to preside at or attend these meetings, and will continue to do so so long as it pleases you to accept my hospitality. Let us treat it as a political game, and play it according to certain rules of *noblesse oblige*." Motilal reciprocated and stayed on for some time, but events subsequently became so unpleasant that he left Bombay after a short stay. Notwithstanding Party differences, our relations remained extremely cordial and one of my agreeable surprises was that on my election to the Legislative Assembly against his Party's accredited candidate, he sent a telegram congratulating me on my success.

In sharp contrast to the figures of Das and Motilal, was Gandhi. I found a great deal in him to learn from and admire. He might rail against European civilisation, but there was hardly any Indian leader who was more European in his methods and habits of work than Gandhi.

His punctuality was like clockwork; so was his brevity, a peculiar characteristic of him. He had none of the loquacity of his older associates, nor their dilatoriness. He worked always with a tiny clock before him, and regulated his movements by the minute.

He was singularly clean in his habits. He ate his meals with extreme regularity. It was a singular habit with him, so unlike many of his colleagues, that he had his food in the open in the sight of his friends and associates. In this respect, he was in striking contrast to his friend and colleague, Malaviya. I once stayed with Malaviya for a whole eight weeks, occupying a room very near to his. I never once had the chance of seeing what he ate, although I was privileged to observe most of his daily habits, including his exercising his lithe body and rubbing it with a nutritious oil prized in

North India. I had actually to make a request to be allowed to see what he lived on from day to day and when I made it, it was of course readily granted.

A striking incident in my contact with Gandhi about this time, which left a great impression on my mind, was in 1920 during my visit to his Ashram. I was talking to him in his sitting room, in the simple cottage where he resided on the banks of the Sabarmati. We were talking about his proposed programme of non-co-operation. I was holding out against him as I was extremely sceptical about its efficacy. He was trying to convince me. While we were engaged in this warm conversation, in walked a girl in a simple frock and bodice, a child, who, I thought, was, in course of time, bound to develop into a pretty woman. I learned later that it was the Depressed Class girl whom Gandhi had brought up as his foster daughter. While she walked in, she playfully held out a boiled potato between her teeth half inside her mouth and the other half outside and playfully remarked to Gandhi, "Bapu, will you bite off this other half?" So saying, she walked on tiptoe to Gandhi and put out her mouth. I waited anxiously to see how Gandhi would respond, whether the great man's sense of caste had really died out to the extent of his biting off the potato from the lips of the Depressed Class girl. To my joy and surprise, however, without a minute's hesitation Gandhi, with equal playfulness, held out his lips to bite off the potato. When the child came near, however, she felt the impropriety of sharing with another what she had touched with her teeth. She recoiled, but Gandhi stood there with an open gesture of accepting the potato. I have never found a man so free from caste aversion as Gandhi. I have seen patriots, equally high in public life, who fraternise with effort with the lower castes. I have even watched a high-class Brahman patriot give the sacred thread by scores to the lower castes on the banks of a sacred river, but the superiority complex was always there, though suppressed with effort. I have seen another patriot perform the marriages of lower castes, reciting Vedic texts—banned in their case, with a benignant smile of condescension on his lips. But it was only Gandhi, the foremost leader of India, who had practically rooted out caste sense from his daily concerns. He no doubt clung to a mode of life in which belief in four *Varnas* (main castes) was not absent, but that I have always thought to be

his academic belief, meant to be a denial of more caste divisions than four, perhaps, a concession to orthodox feeling and certainly the sole remnant of conceptions which he had long outgrown. His sense of truth could at times be very exalted, but he also had an extraordinary capacity of supremely blinding himself to the effects of his theories and actions even though they were obvious to his friends and critics alike.

In politics, he seemed to live in a world of his own and his critical faculties were often powerless to deal with theories which he had fondly espoused all his life. His desire to follow loyally the ideals which had aroused his reverence was profound, but, at times, he evinced a childlike delight in opposing the prejudices of his environment. Tolstoy, Christ and Buddha had a singular sway on him; perhaps each in his own turn. I had seen him at times in exalted moods, when it was difficult to see from which of these three his spirituality arose. He once asked me whether I believed in the well-known episode in Buddha's life, when, in one incarnation centuries before he evolved into Buddhahood, he offered the sacrifice of his body to a hungry tiger. "How glorious would it be," said Gandhi, "if we could all terminate our busy life so that our very bones, flesh and blood could prove serviceable to our fellow creatures." I always thought that behind his theory of fasts, whatever its spectacular or political effect might be (which according to Gandhi's critics was their sole motive), there was a deep-seated asceticism, a feeling more Eastern than Western, that frailty of the body was allied to higher spirituality, especially when it was occasioned by a conscious effort to free the soul from the bondage of the flesh.

His love of Jesus Christ and His teachings appeared to be born of a very deep and reverent study of the Old and New Testaments, though I had never been able to find out whether he had an equal reverence for all the literature which had sprung around that personality and the Bible.

I could recall a couple of occasions when he shocked his audience by a reverential reference to Jesus Christ and His teachings. He did not appear to be equally well-grounded in the knowledge of Indian Saints and their writings. His knowledge of Sanskrit and Indian philosophy was not perhaps as profound as Tilak's, for instance, and this had often led him to interpret ancient sacred texts in a way which shocked

conservative scholarship. He called himself a Vaishnava and it was so suggestive of his deep faith in the teachings of that divinity that, every time he had been arrested, he had called upon his followers to recite, before he was taken away by the police, a verse depicting the pure life of a true Vaishnavite. Apparently, his conception of Vaishnava philosophy was coloured mainly by the devotional writings of Gujerathi writers, depicting, from their peculiar viewpoint, the mysteries of Krishna's incarnation.

I had seen few traces of his adoration for the teachings or actions of Krishna as the *Purna Avatar* (perfect incarnation), a phase which, for instance, many spiritual men in the Deccan and in the South have felt attracted by.

The Krishna, for instance, of the Mahabharat, the friend of the Pândavas, their supporter and ally, the divine chastiser of the wicked, and the helper of the virtuous, the skilful intermediary between justice and injustice, the main personality, round whose doings the doctrine of action without expecting its reward or of fight without hatred is woven, sank into subordinate importance. It is doubtful how far Gandhi's interpretation of Krishna's teachings was responsible for the view, propounded with zest by his laterday followers, that Krishna taught in the Bhagwat Gita the doctrine of non-violence—a view which has shocked contemporary scholars and philosophers as being an attempt to squeeze the plain and unambiguous words of the Gita into compliance with Gandhi's political gospel.

Gandhi's recitations, to which often-times one was privileged to listen during his prayers, would have been far more attractive if he had more knowledge of music and its symphonies. He had often told me that he was devotedly fond of Indian music and, once or twice, asked me to play to him, an opportunity for which however never arose, though on a couple of occasions I was very near it. He even suggested once or twice that we might repair to my country seat in the Western Ghats and devote a couple of days to Indian music but the occasion never came. I was doubtful whether he would be attracted by the complexity of Indian music. In my public career I came across very few Congress leaders—none perhaps except Das and Rangaswami Iyengar—whose education in early life had given them any taste for Indian music, and it is a singular comment on our system of education that

men have grown to high intellectual status and to political eminence without being made acquainted, at any time of their life, with this rich legacy of culture inherited from ancient times. I had rarely heard Gandhi singing an Indian melody for the sheer joy of the tune, apart from its devotional significance. He was no doubt alive to the necessity of music being included in our system of education, and, on one occasion, went so far as to ask me to accept one of his sons as my pupil to learn music under me. The son did study under me for some time but unfortunately he was not able to keep pace with the requisite study.

About Gandhi's political doctrines as I knew them at the time of my contact, it is unnecessary for me to write here. They have been before the world and have become almost international in their influence.

His basic political concept, lifted out of the teachings of Eastern and Western religions, was the doctrine that suffering ennobleth a man, upon which many teachings of Indian Saints, and also of Jesus Christ, have been based.

Many have doubted whether this doctrine, whatever its efficacy may be in the region of personal evolution, has any scope in public affairs, especially in the politics of a conquered and subjugated people like the Indians. I have observed the sway of this doctrine in Gandhi's political theories mixed up with another, a little more complex than the first. It was his profound faith that the sight of suffering on the part of the oppressed evoked feelings of remorse and shame in the mind of the oppressor in sufficient volume to cause a change of heart. "Change of heart" had always been a very favourite shibboleth of Gandhi. He employed it on so many occasions that its use acquired a most grotesque and fantastic significance in the mind of his critics.

For instance, when invited to visit England in connection with the Second Round Table Conference he said, so far as I can recall his words, "I see no purpose in my going unless the British members of the Indian Civil Service—the official class—bless my visit, for, if they did so, it would show a change of heart."

Likewise, in discussing Indian problems with British Statesmen during his visit to England for the Second Indian Round Table Conference, he sometimes occupied a long time in stating his views on the question whether 150 years of British

Rule had been a blessing or a curse to India. Sceptics have often doubted the relevancy of this rudimentary question in debates on matters more immediately concerned with the practical problems of the Round Table Conference. They asked him why he should insist on raising this primary issue and whether he expected an ardent Englishman, proud of the achievements of his race in India, to admit that his ancestors' administration in India was throughout a curse to the country and what the practical effect of such an admission would be on the day's problems, difficult enough of solution, which confronted the Round Table Conference. Gandhi's invariable answer was, "Oh! such an admission would show a change of heart." This expression, owing to its hackneyed use, became, in course of time, an object of derision amongst his critics and even his followers and admirers would be chary of using the expression in their later utterances and writings. Many of us, full of reverence and esteem for him, felt that, at times, this doctrine of remorse produced by the sight of inflicted suffering had been carried to unpractical lengths, which often provoked the mirth of our opponents. For instance, at the time of the police charges on crowds guilty of manufacturing salt, it used to be a frequent sight in Bombay that a single white police sergeant beat sometimes a hundred or two hundred Indians on their heads. Many were wounded and taken to "the Congress Hospital". I was once invited to visit the hospital. While I went through the several wards where many lay wounded on their sick beds, mostly Gujeratis, a stalwart Maratha shouted to me to come to him. I did so, and found that he had eight to ten wounds, all on his head, ears and face. I asked him how it was that he got them all on his head; did he not use his arms to parry the blows? He replied, half mockingly, "Ah! are you not aware that we are taught to take all the blows on the head, the best part of the body, so that the effect of the chastisement in God's retributive annals might be increasingly detrimental to the British Raj, for every wound which is caused on the head has larger efficacy in the scale of political retribution than a similar wound in any other part of the body. So we do not parry the blows with sticks or arms, but willingly receive them on the head."

This may be regarded, in certain quarters, as a parody of Gandhi's doctrine. Perhaps it is so, perhaps the Maratha

patient, after his first enthusiasm for what he thought was a fruitless satyagraha was over, put a little sarcasm into the narration of his suffering, but his sentiments were not uncommon amongst many who did not see the alleged moral principle behind. But the singular fact is that thousands of men have borne and suffered uncomplainingly, without retaliation, severe lathi charges in cases where a couple of white police sergeants have belaboured a couple of hundred Indians.

Many have doubted the efficacy of this prescription of Home Rule when applied to a subject people like us. The reply has always been, "Ah! but this is non-violence", just as if, in God's retributive methods, non-violence had any special efficacy in matters of political agitation. Cases are not unknown where this political nostrum often took the form of the Christian doctrine, "God says 'Revenge is mine'." Many of Gandhi's followers left retribution in the hands of the Divine. Some however doubted the political efficacy of this. Knowing that God's mills grind slowly, perhaps it was a preparation for freedom through suffering, but at what cost and with what result! Did it make men more moral? It is doubtful whether this doctrine made men truly non-violent in their sentiments. That they were non-violent in action was due often, as our critics said, to their submission before superior force and might. Did they imbibe the doctrine so as to curb their intolerance, their desire for revenge and retribution?

It is more than doubtful whether this theory of non-violence, especially its moral side, succeeded in politics and whether the political changes that followed were the result of the remorse caused in the British mind by the sight of our non-violent suffering. I have not enough knowledge about South African affairs to be able to say whether it succeeded there. If it did, the conditions must have been different from those in India. For there are many who would unhesitatingly declare that it had not succeeded in Indian political life. It did not make men more forgiving or tolerant. It did not bring remorse to the British oppressor. It did not change his heart. It certainly did not produce respect in his mind for the Indian who writhed and crawled under his lathi charge. The doctrine had its significance in the highest scale of moral values, which was beyond the conception of the ordinary Britisher or Indian

and its acceptance without question and without intelligent understanding produced in the long run hypocrisy, conceit and vanity, tending to obnoxious intolerance, which was aggravated by the rapid growth of power politics and party Government. I once asked Gandhi from where he obtained this doctrine of sight of suffering leading to remorse. He replied he practised it in his family as against his relatives' tyranny with great success, obviously provoking a mild jibe that the Britisher was not India's relative and would never feel for the Indian what Gandhi's relatives felt for him. There are obviously certain theories operative in the sanctity and affection of family life, which, practised outside, prove failures, and this doctrine was one of this description. The truth of the matter is that this doctrine was too high for the ordinary Indian to understand, and, in his fervent desire to obey Gandhi, he attempted something which was psychologically beyond his ken. Apart from the harm such blind acceptance on a large scale caused to the community, it gave the ordinary Muslim the impression that Gandhi was, in the guise of national politics, forcing on the country surreptitiously some recondite aspects of the Hindu faith, too subtle for the ordinary Muslim to understand. For a long time, this feeling of suspicion was the basis of the Muslims' opposition to the national effort and was fully taken advantage of by Muslim leaders seeking to drive a wedge through Indian unity. At a unity conference convened in Delhi, where Indian politicians rubbed shoulders with Muslim divines, whom Hindu opinion was persuaded to accept as representative of Muslim sentiment, after Gandhi had explained his theories, a Muslim divine, who died a few months ago, got up and said, "Talking of religion, my religion teaches me that I should kill a cow, and do certain other things which may appear offensive to the Hindus. Am I going to give up all this because the Indian Law punishes it, or because Indian nationalism requires its abandonment?" This speech, to which I listened with amazement, sitting next to Lajpatrai, was a bolt from the blue and exposed the folly of cloaking political teachings in a garb calculated to arouse the religious suspicion of ignorant non-Hindus.

Those who had watched the trend of Muslim opinion about this time through their papers in North India, would have no hesitation in saying that there was a distinct cleavage in Indian

sentiment, caused mainly by the propagation of these quasi-metaphysical doctrines, considered as weird by Muslim opinion, and the Indian National Congress, acting under their sway, came to be regarded as a Hindu organization. This suspicion persisted for a long time, leading later to the raising of the cry for a division of India and to nourishing the strength of Jinnah's following. It will be difficult to forget, in this behalf, the proceedings of a Muslim Conference convened much later by Jinnah and his followers, about the time the British Cabinet Mission was holding its sittings in New Delhi. Particularly noticeable was a speech by a Muslim leader, since then a high official in Pakistan, threatening the Hindus with minatory words that if India was not divided by the British before their departure, the doings of Chengiz Khan (meaning of course his mammoth religious massacres) would be repeated. The day after this speech was delivered, it was my turn to give evidence before the British Mission, when Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy of India, was present. The leader of the British Mission asked me what I thought of this religious fanaticism. My reply was a warning to the British Mission not to be frightened by these speeches, to which we had been habituated for a long time, since the religious frenzy of Muslim leaders had been aroused, and that the future Indian Government would quell such outbursts if put in power to do so; that these speeches were for the special edification of the British Mission, to overawe them into a division of the country; that it was not a novel sight for some of us who had been listening to such terrific outbursts from the good old days when politics and religion formed an inseparable amalgam. I proceeded to observe that similar speeches would be made at Westminster, if England, by some freak, had separate communal electorates, Catholics voting for Catholics, Protestants for Protestants, destroying thereby, perhaps within a year, the long established British unity. I added that this was the joint result of religious frenzy aroused in politics and the vicious system of separate communal electorates planted by the British in India. Neither Lord Wavell, nor Sir Stafford Cripps, who was then in full possession of his brilliant powers, made any comment in reply.

This is not, however, a new experience when emotional extremism becomes the gist of a political creed. It naturally attracts followers professing lip sympathy with it, but having

neither the courage nor the aptitude for following the doctrines proclaimed by their leader. I remember once saying to Gandhi that the difficulty is "that in your contagious contact, saintliness seems so easy". I added that when a political or any other creed adopts practices difficult for the ordinary man to follow with sincerity and conviction, the result is that, round the banner of such a creed, gathers an assemblage of followers, either hypocrites or deluded men, unable to realize the implications of what they preach or practise.

Shankarâchârya, the ancient ascetic philosopher of India, voiced a truth perpetually true, when he said in one of his memorable *stotras* that an unreachable ideal of asceticism—and the same is true of political ideals—attracts all manner of hypocrites and fanatics:

Some grow their hair long, some shave it off clean, some tie it up in upright knots, some wear saffron-coloured clothes, some change their apparel time after time; it is a mad rage in which everyone tries to distinguish himself by his oddities, to catch the public eye, and thereby fill his belly.

A hostile critic would say that this was exactly the case with Gandhi's theories. In the name of non-violence, more violence of language and sentiment was preached than was ever known before. Types of vituperation, personal invective, unjust judgment, wild scandal-mongering, were invented, the likes of which had hardly been seen before. Newspapers and journals, professing lip sympathy with Gandhi's doctrine, hurled denunciation at his critics, full of the grossest falsehoods and malignant lies; and Gandhi had frankly to confess his impotence to check this undergrowth of venal and abusive journalism. In communities and political groups which were united previously, his theories threw apples of discord. Everywhere it was the wail of disunion, differences and hostility. At a later date, his attitude at the Indian Round Table Conference in England, drove the minorities to adopt the notorious Minorities Pact. He denied to the Depressed Classes even a single seat by reservation, except through the medium of the Congress. Later, he fasted in India against Prime Minister Macdonald's award, comparatively a more balanced arrangement than the later "Poona Pact", which had to be accepted at the point of the bayonet as it were. The

effect of this Pact was deeply deplored in Bengal by leaders who had been Gandhi's loyal followers before.

For a long time, India lay prostrate with despair. It looked as if she had played her last trump card. The British had no fear of Gandhi any more, and the result of his visit to England was that the apprehensions entertained by British statesmen that Gandhi was perhaps a Mussolini, a Lenin or a Hitler, all disappeared, and he came to be regarded, to quote the sententious verdict of a high British statesman at the end of the second Indian Round Table Conference, as "politically vague, spiritually obscurantist, nothing difficult to manage."

Since his rise to high eminence, the Deccani and Gujarati in Bombay vie with each other in mutual hatred and aversion. For months he was described by the Gujarati Press as the *Suputra* (worthy son) of Gujarat, and he helped Gujarati egotism by his observation that "Gujarat would win freedom for India."

I am aware that his apologists would say, perhaps without denying the truth of my comments, that as against all this, he brought about an awakening of the masses to a greater degree than ever before. I am aware of this achievement, but to me it appears like the famous instance where a purchaser who bought a powerful boiler on the seller's representation that the heat generated by it would drive a complex machine, was, on the failure of the boiler to move the machine, asked to console himself that if the boiler did not move the machine, he, in any event, got buckets of hot water from the boiler. In like manner, what Gandhi had promised the country was "Swaraj in the shortest time". That drove the people to make immense sacrifices for the cause. To tell them later that his teachings had awakened the masses though Swaraj had receded, was to ask them to accept stones for bread.

All this relates to Gandhi as I knew him in his later development as the supreme leader of the Congress, but I loved to dwell upon him as the sweet and admirable personality I knew in the Punjab, to whom I felt attracted by his supreme devotion to truth and his hatred of cant and hypocrisy.

I pass on now to another member of the Punjab group--Malaviya or Malviji as we affectionately called him. He had the just reputation of being the most refined Hindu of his age. Polite and modest to a degree, kind, considerate and even humbly apologetic, his attractive personality had been a

very prominent landmark in the growth of Indian nationalism. In the Punjab Inquiry his position was slightly different from ours. Technically he was not a member of the Committee, but his voice was always respected and prevailed on the side of moderation and restraint. He generally agreed with Gandhi and to their joint effort must be attributed the recommendation of the Committee that, though Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy in the Martial Law regime, by his weak behaviour at the time had fully merited an impeachment, as in the ancient case of Warren Hastings, India would gain more by forgoing that demand than by insisting on it.

To know Malaviya was to love him. He was very conservative in his ideas, but they very rarely took an obtrusive or offensive form. He was a staunch Hindu in the sense that he devoutly believed in the messages of Hindu culture and civilisation. In his personal behaviour he was a strict conservative, but his conservatism was not a superficial pose but was often justified by the strict and high standards of personal purity which he always adopted.

He had a great gift of conversation. I remember an occasion when he came to see me in Bombay about mid-day. Our conversation continued till after dinner that night. I offered him, during the interval, fruit, milk and water, none of which he would take. When it grew late, and I had my meals during the interval, I begged of him to accept some food. With hesitation he mentioned that he would only take a raw coconut. It was then past midnight and it was only with difficulty it could be had at that late hour. When it was procured, he insisted on opening it himself with a clasp knife which had to be washed clean in his presence. He drank the water, not in a cup or glass, but from out of the coconut, leaving the kernel untouched. If all conservative Hindus were as modest, humble and unobtrusive as Malaviya was in the manifestation of their conservatism, much of the irritation that orthodoxy causes by its obtrusive or offensive superiority would disappear.

Last of all came Abbas Tyabji. To me, personally, he had a great attraction, a part of which was due to the fact that he looked very much like and also belonged to the family of Badruddin Tyabji, the High Court Judge, for whom I always had the highest regard and esteem. Abbas Tyabji was free from all communal taint, was overflowing with the milk

of human kindness, and, in our conclaves, his knowledge of the British, amongst whom he had spent many of his early years, was of great value. He wrote and spoke English and Urdu well, and had a great sense of humour, which rescued the Committee, not unoften, from being smothered by the tragedy of the occasion. He dealt with the witnesses in a friendly, gentle way and made them come out with details when they thawed. The Martial Law regime had chilled them. Many of them had to be gently taken in hand by Tyabji and led on from one detail to another with a caressing gesture. Tyabji was eminently fitted for it, and the stories of the witnesses, after they had been subjected to his gentle manipulation, had the ring of truth. I doubt whether without Tyabji's gentle and persuasive ways our Committee would have secured half the disclosures which they ultimately were able to embody in their Report.

The Martial Law regime was a rule of blood and iron. As the chief perpetrator, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, remarked to a Punjab lawyer, "Remember, Gandhi talks of soul force, but there is another force greater than Gandhi's soul force"; saying this, the Punjab administrator raised his fist in a menacing manner. This gesture was typical of the Punjab Martial Law regime.

We often wondered, listening to the evidence, how tall, stalwart Punjabis, Hindus and Muslims, could have undergone humiliating punishments like, for example, the crawling order and flogging on the triangle. About these punishments, the Congress Committee observed that they were unworthy of a civilized administration and were symptomatic of the moral degradation of their inventors. But, as we advanced, we found little difficulty in understanding the phenomenon, when witness after witness testified to the terror which had been established in the Punjab by the myrmidons of the Martial Law. It was a veritable reign of terror deliberately established to cow down and suppress the people by drastic humiliation. As the Committee observed in their Report (p. 158):

The Jallianwala massacre was a calculated piece of inhumanity towards utterly innocent and unarmed men, including children, and was unparalleled for its ferocity in the history of modern British administration

Tyabji's gentle handling was the sole antidote against the effects of this chilling fright. It was touching to see the affectionate terms on which he and Gandhiji stood to each other. Later Tyabji went to jail more than once in sweet compliance with Gandhi's teachings, though personally his politics had always appeared to bear a different complexion.

The Report of the Committee, as I have said above, was the work of Gandhi in collaboration with me. While it was going through the press, I had most pleasing contacts with Gandhi. Towards the end of March that year I became ill. Gandhi thought that my illness was due to heavy work and the high-pressure activities entailed by the publication of the Report with great speed. I could then see the deep affection of which Gandhi was capable. As I lay on my sick bed, Gandhi would come to my house, and again and again would insist on sitting on my bed gently to massage my body, against the protests of my mother and wife. He would say, addressing my mother, "Your son has done such hard work for the country, I might soothe him by my healing power." So saying he would ease my aching limbs until I felt ashamed of myself.

To get the best picture of Gandhi one has to read the Report which is mostly his handiwork. Even as a piece of literature, it would stand very high. Sharp, crisp, short sentences, almost biblical in their brevity, simplicity and truth, will be found scattered through the Report. Its tone is one of forgiveness, of a generous desire to forget British wrongs. The truth had to be told, but Gandhi did it in a manner which did not exploit the popular resentment in a spirit of revenge. His greatest service to India was, and I had hoped that the British Government would recognise it some day, that he harnessed the feeling of resentment and revenge and softly turned it into channels of constructive work to build up a nation out of its memories of injustice and humiliation.

His Report on the Punjab massacre was, I think, the beginning of this process, and he deliberately set himself to paint the picture in colours true but not lurid. One realized from the perusal of the Report that a great wrong had been done to India by men brutalized by irresponsible power, but there was no acrimony of a revengeful character left behind by the perusal. The British could never be too thankful for Gandhiji's great work on the Punjab Committee. A less pure

man would have utilised the occasion for starting a bloody conflagration throughout the country, for indeed the materials were all there, and the public feeling heated enough to make a holocaust of all that was British. Voices in the air in those days were anti-British, and a patriot, with less love of the British people, less insight into the working of the Indian nature, would have found it extremely easy to make the Punjab massacre the occasion for a bloody revolution, regardless of the ultimate consequences. Shortly after the publication I received the following letter from Gandhi inviting me to visit England to obtain support for our Report, but owing to illness I could not go and the idea was dropped.

Dear Mr. Jayakar,

I enclose herewith a draft cable in connection with our Report. I need not say anything further as I hope to meet you on Tuesday. I would like you to consider the advisability of your going to England alone to support our Report. I am totally against a spectacular display in the shape of sending a big deputation. It will hamper swift movement and concentration and it can only irritate the authorities. I want to be absolutely frank. I consider that I am the fittest to go, but my going is a virtual impossibility. You come next in my view, because you are a student like me and we want a man of application and studious habits and possessing a level head. Whether you can spare yourself or not is another question. The only possible men who can do effective work, besides us two, are Malaviyaji and Motilalji and Mr. Das. I have not considered the relative merits, because I myself feel that Malaviyaji cannot be spared from India. I know that Motilalji ought not to be, unless certain things happen and Mr. Das has a heavy case to which, I understand, he is tied down for three months. I have gone into this matter somewhat fully, because we may not get time during my short stay in Bombay for an exhaustive discussion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

Sunday

The few months which followed the publication of the Congress Committee's Report were utilised by Gandhi for developing his theories about non-co-operation and preparing the people for the acceptance of his doctrines. The country had been stirred by a perusal of the Report. For weeks thereafter, a subdued wave of resentment passed over the country. Newspaper articles and leader writers were unanimous in

advising the country to prepare itself for a struggle which would make the repetition of the Punjab massacre an impossibility.

Speaking of agitation in England, one incident might be mentioned on which I differed from the views of the Sub-Committee, though later my views were accepted by my colleagues. This incident created a great stir at the time and it related to the question whether Mr. Nevill, a London solicitor, entrusted with the conduct of Privy Council Appeals relating to the Martial Law convictions, who worked with the Congress Inquiry Committee, was to be entrusted with the publication in London of the evidence collected by us prior to the publication of our Report in India. On this point, I held very strong views which were communicated to Abbas Tyabji in my letter dated 10 January 1920, a material portion from which is quoted below:

... You know my views about the propriety of handing over the evidence to Mr. Nevill. We discussed this matter and you agreed with the view I took that it would be wrong to anticipate the results of our enquiry in England before it was made public in India. Apparently, the Sub-Committee took a contrary view, for Mr. Nevill told me that he had been entrusted with the power of making use of this evidence even to the extent of publication in order to anticipate and destroy the result of the Hunter Committee's enquiry. This, I think, is an improper step and I think that we have acted wrongly in putting all this evidence into the hands of Mr. Nevill to be published in portions or on occasions as he thinks fit prior to its publication in India.

After consideration of my letter, my views were accepted, as is indicated in the letter of Secretary Santanam to me, of 25 January 1920, a material extract from which is quoted below:

... I am in receipt of your previous letter and I have also read the long letter you wrote to Mr. Tyabji about the statements given to Mr. Nevill when he was going away from India. I think, we now all quite agree that what you think about the matter of publication is absolutely correct and it is most undesirable that any of the statements should be published in England before our Report is out. Mr. Das has wired to me that he is of the same opinion as you and so are all the others and I am glad that you took prompt action and cabled to him [Mr. Nevill] instructions not to publish any of the information placed at his disposal.

For several weeks after the publication of our Report Gandhi travelled from place to place, referring to the incidents in the Punjab and harnessing the resentment caused thereby for some constructive effort at national unity. His colleagues in the Punjab enquiry had gone back to their work. Malaviya was travelling from place to place, trying to divert public resentment into a channel of constructive work. The air was full of suggestions that some great effort had to be made. This feeling was largely promoted by the news of the friendly reception in certain quarters which Dyer had obtained in England and by the reports of the debates in the House of Lords, leading to a public fund started in his support. The official Hunter Committee's Report had come out in the meanwhile, and the disclosures made therein, especially in the evidence which it had collected, had made a deep impression on the Indian mind as also on a section of the British public. For a long time there was great vagueness in Gandhi's utterances, but gradually he began to develop his idea of non-co-operation. Its main doctrine was—let Indians take their hands off the Government machine, so that it stops working automatically. Its chief centres of activity, its fly-wheels so to say, were (1) Schools and Colleges, and (2) Law Courts. The Government derived their prestige, it was said, and their continuance and consequent hold on the Indian public, through their system of education, the chief characteristics of which were that it was imparted through a foreign medium, that the ideals placed before the students were directly or indirectly full of glorification of the British, their exploits in history, with special reference to their conquest of India. The achievements of the Indian people were kept in the background, and their inferiority systematically represented as born of intercommunal jealousies, sectional disunion, traditional cunning, general pusillanimity, due altogether to the effect of an inferior civilization which had to give way, at the very first contact, to the more virile civilization of the European races.

Gandhi found in the state of education a fruitful field for inculcating his doctrines, and he forcefully levelled his attacks upon the system which, it was suggested, the British had wickedly introduced into the country. Writers were not wanting to point out, in support of Gandhi's view, that, before the advent of the British, India possessed an excellent system

of popular education. Scattered throughout the villages there were schools, Moslem and Hindu, and though they had not then taken the regular shape of public seminaries, they formed centres almost in every village where the boys used to meet regularly from day to day, and were taught the three R's by the Moulvi or the Pandit of the village. Not infrequently extracts from some epic or ancient poem would be read out to them, making them acquainted with the history and culture of their race, thereby making them proud of the achievements of their ancestors. It was further pointed out that the British had destroyed this system, and had replaced it with nothing which could bring, within measurable distance of these villages, any centres of education tending to remove ignorance and superstition. Reference was made, with pointed bitterness, to the failure of Gokhale to get his Compulsory Primary Education Bill passed owing to the hostile attitude of the Government which remained unbroken in spite of Gokhale's agreeing to the levy of an education-cess to meet the cost of his proposals. Extracts were quoted from a valuable report of Dr. Leitner (the sole copy of which was then available in the library of the Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society), stating that India's valuable indigenous system of mass education, which existed for centuries, was destroyed by the British, and several of its features were copied for propagation in England and were subsequently made the basis of an Act of Parliament, relating to compulsory primary education.

It is incredible how, within the short period of a few months, attacks against the British system of Education developed into a mighty wave, before which old institutions in the country tottered. Appeals were made to the self-respect of the Indian student and to his timidity and incompetence as compared to the intrepidity and adventure of European students. The seat of all evil was the school and college. It had to be basically reformed, but, before that could be done, it had to be destroyed. Destruction must precede construction, empty the schools and colleges, let students remain idle rather than receive education poisoned by the touch of a foreign government. The result of all this teaching was that students themselves began to doubt the efficacy of English education.

The next victim of the attack was the lawyer. British Courts contributed to British prestige. The nation's mind was

diverted by litigation. Lawyers were worse than cobblers; they were like fungi which fed on the trunk of the social tree. Lawyers built large fortunes on the quarrelsome tendencies of the poor rayat. They tightened the hold of British domination; they pleaded in a foreign language and before foreign judges. They spread a respect for foreign laws passed in the so-called Legislatures, where the main inspiration was official. If the Courts could be stopped from working and if the lawyers could be induced to give up their practice, it would be a great gain to the country. Litigation would go down, money would be saved; the nation's wealth would be conserved. The hold of British rule over the country would loosen. Men would be set free for more constructive work. Arbitration Boards would be established, tending to create confidence in Indian agencies dispensing justice. Litigation would become cheap. Justice would be administered in a less formal way, leading to saving of costs and to speedy results. In some of the characteristic speeches of the time, it was suggested that a cobbler performed greater service to society than a lawyer.

Out of such cries gradually developed the doctrine of non-co-operation. We never had an authoritative definition of that word, but its best exposition consisted of two aspects—self-reliance and hands off the Government machine. The machine was kept going by Indians themselves. Let us all take our hands off it and it will stop without any further effort. It would be a silent revolution without violence or bloodshed.

For a long time the public men of India were baffled by this cry of non-co-operation. It was so unfamiliar, so dissimilar to all that they had heard previously. They had spent years on the Congress platform, talking of Dominion Status, the separation of the judiciary and the executive, maintenance of the connection between India and England, more appointments of Indians on Executive Councils and other places of responsibility and honour. Even in later days, they had become inured to the comparatively drastic teachings of the Poona and Bengal Schools, between whom there had always been great affinity since the days of Tilak and Motilal Ghose. Indian leaders had changed their ideals from time to time, but their varying phases of belief and activity had always been in the direction of claiming a greater share in the work of administration

This was, therefore, a new cry of non-co-operation, in many ways the exact reverse of what they had been taught as their political gospel. The country took some time to understand this doctrine. The older leaders, for a long time were sceptical. They did not understand much of it and they shook their heads in doubt and perplexity at what little they understood. Lajpat Rai and Malaviya were among those who were openly sceptical. They had led the Congress under the old regime. Lajpat Rai and Pheroza Shah Mehta might have been opponents on the Congress platform but they both spoke in terms of larger Indian participation in the duties, concerns and responsibilities of government. Tilak and Wacha were mortal opponents, but both had pleaded, on and outside the Congress platform, for larger opportunities for Indians to share the burden and responsibility of the Government of their country. Gandhi's was a new gospel. Its teachings were so different. Some malcontents, of course, hailed it as the voice of a new Messiah, but the sober ones hummed and hawed. Some of them, unwilling to lose their wonted popularity, were concerned in discovering new means of reconciling their familiar theories with the principle of the new thought. Tilak suddenly had become ill and was lying at death's door at Bombay. His friends, who had opportunities to listen to his voice, rendered weak and feeble by a fast-consuming illness, openly stated that he was sceptical of the new political thought. It was said that he even warned his friends to examine the new doctrine very critically, for it appeared to him dangerous and full of snags and pitfalls. They regretted that he was dying. If he could only live he would present, with his wide popularity and close grip over the public mind, an adequate opposition to the spreading waves of the new doctrine, but the cruel hand of death threatened to remove him from the arena. His followers, left without their usual guide, felt perplexed for a long time as to what they should do. Their acuteness, sharpened by contact with Tilak, told them that there was something wrong with the new doctrine. They did not know where the defect lay. They could not lay their hands on its weaknesses, but they felt, though very vaguely, that it was not a safe doctrine to accept without critical examination. In the writings of Marathi newspapers of this time one found deep laments that the sagacious mind and trusted leadership of Tilak had been

removed by an unkind Providence at a critical time when a leader of great clarity was necessary to examine with cruel frankness the potentialities of the new doctrine. Khaparde, to whose credit it must be said that from the very start he had set his face against the new gospel, was struggling to call together the disintegrated and scattered forces that Tilak had left behind him. The Poona politicians, however, though in possession of a powerful organ in English and another in Marathi, which found their way into thousands of homes, were too perplexed. They were swept off their feet. For a long time they sat on the fence trying to find out "which way the catch would jump". Gradually, however, they descended on the side of the new creed, at least to the extent of examining its potency instead of rejecting it summarily.

In course of time, however, the problem began to appear to the Poona politicians in a different light. The new leader and his new creed were gradually becoming popular. They appealed to the people by their very novelty and audacity. Could the Poona politicians retain their traditional hold on the public by opposing the advance of the new thought? That the thought was making new conquests, they could easily see. Today it captured Bombay, tomorrow Poona, a few days later Belgaum. It was like a prairie fire, spreading fast and wide. Could they retain their position in public life and yet oppose it? There was a time when the seasoned politicians of Maharashtra could have done so, if they had all met and presented a united front of opposition to the onslaught of the new school. It was a psychological moment; its duration could last perhaps only for a few weeks. During these weeks however, the new preacher was gathering form and strength. He had made converts in some Provinces. The asceticism, purity and self-reliance of the new doctrine appealed to many young minds. They were being gradually converted and every day converts were popuring in, in small numbers at first, but in increasing hordes as time advanced.

While the older politicians were waiting to make up their mind, the new doctrine was gathering strength. It ultimately reached Bengal, after rapid conquests on the way. Patna yielded an esteemed disciple, Rajendra Prasad, a lovable character, highly respected in circles official and non-official, known for great integrity, purity of life and intense modesty—in every way a fitting torch-bearer of the new dispensation.

The entry of the new doctrines into Bengal had characteristic effect. Many leaders in Bengal had an ancient affinity with the Maratha school of politics. These two provinces had, for many years, gone together in political thought. Their youth possessed common attributes, emotion and self-sacrifice. They were both courageous in their outlook. Many have marvelled at this affinity between these two Provinces, seemingly so dissimilar—one emotional, cultured and self-expressive under the teaching of Chaitanya and, later Tagore—the other nurtured in the rugged fastnesses of the Sahyadri Hills and on the practical and almost arid political philosophy of the saint Ramdas. But a closer examination of their apparent dissimilarities could have revealed that at the high level of political idealism these two Provinces met. That level is the one at which courageous self-surrender reached a practical form. Rightly understood, Bengal and Maharashtra would have found a great deal to like and imitate in each other.* Motilal Ghose and other old prophets were dead. Tagore was too remote from politics, though there was reason to believe that he looked with doubt and suspicion upon the efficacy of the new doctrine. Referring in later years to the Sabarmati Ashram, where he had then stayed for some time, he remarked to me

... What a wilderness of white colour; the walls of the buildings are white, the river sands are white, the khaddar is white, everything is white at the Ashram. Mark you, before long it will develop into a political cult as intolerant and tyrannical as the civilization born of the sandy deserts of Arabia. The white colour is a colour of intolerance. Gandhi has adopted it, it will have its consequences.

Those who have watched the progress of the movement in its subsequent years, would be able to vouch how true the poet's vision was. But for the moment, he was unable to check its onflow. He was not a politician—a seer very rarely descends into the arena of political polemics. He did, however, warn his circle of private friends against the alluring teachings of the new thought, but he could not do what a militant politician like Tilak could. There was also in Bengal the great figure of Ashutosh Mukherjee. But he was in official harness. He was big enough to form a group and stand against the advancing tide, but his points of contact

with public life were restricted. In later months, however, when the movement touched his favourite University of Calcutta, Ashutosh Mukherjee did take off his gloves and descend into the arena. The students of Bengal will ever recall with gratitude that it was Ashutosh who courageously prevented the collapse of the Calcutta University in later months.

In the earlier days of the movement, the youth of Bengal had a natural distrust of the new school. Many of them were men of action. They delighted in calling themselves *Karmi Sangha* (Society of Men of Action). Some of them had been reclaimed from the hallucinations of the Terrorist movement. The non-violence of the new school was a new recipe. Was it worth trying? Had all the old weapons failed? The sharp contrast between the cult of the bomb and revolver and the new theory of suffering and expiation perplexed them. *In this confusion, a section of them was inclined to give a trial to the new method, but the large majority were sceptical and remained so for a long time, though occasionally professing sympathy for the teachings.

In this welter of ideas, some of the thoughtful leaders of Bengal saw the great danger of letting an outsider like Gandhi have an unhampered hold over the youth of their Province. Das saw this danger, perhaps more clearly than any other leader. It is certain that, for a long time, his virile mind rebelled against the puerilities of the new doctrines, but their sacrifice and renunciation appealed to him. He was then at the height of his glory, both as a lawyer and as a public leader. The successful conduct of a few criminal cases in defence of the spirited youth of the country had won him great esteem and popularity amongst the younger men. His generous public benefactions and widespread secret help had won for him a great name as a charitable and patriotic man. His work on the Jallianwala Committee had added fresh laurels to his brow. He soon saw that it was a glorious opportunity to lead and direct the young men of his Province in seeming accord with the new doctrine, but with freedom later to modify it to suit his conception of a popular movement. After some hesitation, he placed himself at the crest of this wave.

What had happened to Das in Bengal was emblematic of the transformation which took place in several other Provinces.

In each Province, there were, in those days, one or two leading men who would have liked to oppose the advance of the new ideas, but they were all isolated. One group did not know what was passing in the mind of a similar group in another Province. Gandhi was becoming popular too rapidly to allow these groups to meet together and consider a common course of action. His whirlwind campaign none could withstand; while weaker men stumbled and tottered, he took himself from one conquest to another and his increasing boldness in proclaiming his doctrines staggered not a few. In this atmosphere, the Indian National Congress met in Nagpur.

It was an eventful session, because of the complete conquest which Gandhi established over hesitating and doubtful leaders. He boldly proclaimed his new theories. Those who compare the trend of the resolutions and speeches at the next previous session of the Congress at Amritsar and those later at Nagpur, would be struck by the rapid advance which the new doctrines had made during the year. The old voices of the Congress of Pherozeshah Mehta, Gokhale and Surendranath could be heard, however faintly, in the proceedings at Amritsar. Though the country was then convulsed with the tragedy of Jallian-wala Bagh, still the resolutions at Amritsar were not totally full of the new idea. Tilak was then alive. Motilal Nehru had not then taken on the new role. The Bombay school of thought was pressing and effective in its large numbers. Vijayaraghavachariar, the old stalwart Congressman of Salem, was a tower of strength. Mrs. Besant was also there and she was not likely to forsake the views of a lifetime. All this, however, had changed during the year and, at Nagpur, Gandhi practically had his way.

The session was an augury of his future triumph. At the Nagpur Congress, he made one of his finest conquests in Jamnalal Bajaj. Many were struck, at that time, with the rapidity of the conversion of an astute, shrewd, calculating Marwari merchant prince into a close adherent of the expiatory renunciation preached by Gandhi; but there it was.

A careful study of the proceedings at the Nagpur Congress would reveal the wonderful rapidity with which India could adopt new political thoughts if only a leader could be found of sufficient vigour, sacrifice and popularity to preach them. Gandhi marched triumphant through that session, in spite of

the opposition offered by men like Das, Malaviya and Lajpatrai. The last was, perhaps, his strongest opponent and if I might say from personal knowledge, remained so in thought up to his dying day.

Lajpatrai was an Arya Samajist. He had lived a free and many sided life in America. He was a meat eater; had a strong, vigorous, virile hatred of British rule, and among Gandhi's many conquests he took the longest time to be converted. When he ultimately fell at Calcutta, he did so in the presence of superior force, which Gandhi had by that time obtained, both in sympathy and in money.

In later years, I was privileged to be Lajpatrai's deputy in the leadership of the Nationalist Party in the Legislative Assembly at New Delhi for about three years. I had frequent and intimate talks with him and I am in a position to vouch that his belated surrender to Gandhi did not represent any change of opinion at all, but was dictated more by the fruitlessness of continued opposition. The despondency of the situation led to the feeling which then lurkily dominated many other minds, viz. that, after all, it was better to be with Gandhi in the new movement and trim it if possible from within rather than stand out of it and let it spread without control or hindrance. One phase, however, of the new movement attracted men like Lajpatrai. It was the call for social reform, which formed the inner lining of the Gandhi movement.

The time after the Nagpur Congress, Gandhi utilized for the rapid spread of his doctrines. It was one spectacle of succumbing and surrender in all the Provinces of India. Men stood out against it for a time, but were compelled to kneel before the advancing tide. Gangadharrao Deshpande of Belgaum was Gandhi's great conquest in Maharashtra. His conversion acted as a flank movement in Gandhi's favour. Gangadharrao was a leader with a record of great sacrifice and of great popularity; he stood on the border line between the hard-headed Marathas and the emotional Kanarese. In Tilak's time, he was one of his devoted followers.

Gangadharrao's speeches from the year 1916 onwards had been characterized by great emotion and earnestness. I first heard him in 1916 at a Provincial Conference and he struck me as a man of intense patriotism and sincerity; quite a contrast to the political duplicity of some other followers of

Tilak. Gangadharrao was able to secure for Gandhi the conversion and adherence of many men, not only in the Karnatak districts, to which he belonged, but in Maharashtra, where his name was familiar and respected.

He soon founded a friendly centre in Belgaum, which spread its affinities into the surrounding districts, including Dharwar. This was the time when one could see a distinct cleavage of views between the doubting and hesitating teachings of the Poona *Kesari* school and the rapid conversions of the younger men in the Karnatak districts. If the wiser men amongst Tilak's followers had taken time by the forelock, had called together a conference of Tilak's attenuated following at this critical time, before Gandhi had driven the roots of his new doctrines deep into the Maratha soil, if they could have evolved a political programme full of sacrifice and efficiency, they would possibly have offered a strong check to the advance of the new doctrines. But they vacillated with timidity and while they procrastinated, Gandhi was marching on. The *Kesari* and the *Maratha* newspapers opposed Gandhi, even ridiculed some of his doctrines, but when, after a few months, they discovered that Gandhi had become too strong for their ridicule and obloquy, they did what weak leadership often does; they picked out one or two items of Gandhi's programme and approvingly put it before the public.

It is surprising and shows considerable acumen on the part of Gandhi that he was not at all impressed with the so-called conversion of Maharashtra. Not only then, but at all subsequent stages of his movement, he has doubted, in his courteous ways, the sincerity of Maratha allegiance and some of his Gujarati followers have often openly scouted it in terms of suspicion, opprobrium and ridicule. It is certain that if Poona had openly set out against Gandhi and his school, it would have secured from him and his followers a far greater meed of respect and admiration than it did by its halting and disingenuous conversion.

In the subsequent history of the movement, Maharashtra succeeded in obtaining for itself the reputation of a 'slacker', not to mention that, in the inner conclaves of Gandhi's followers, some of the Maharashtra leaders earned the unenviable reputation of being the secret enemies of the movement, wolves in sheep's disguise, who had entered into the fold with the view—secret yet deliberate—of weakening the strength of

the movement. To this day, this charge is being levelled against Maharashtra leaders. It is doubtful, and perhaps the truth will never be known, as to how far Maharashtra opposition to Gandhi was based on a genuine dislike and disbelief in his methods and principles and how far it arose from a feeling of complete loyalty to the leadership of Tilak and the consequent unwillingness to recognize the greatness of another and, in a sense, a rival leader. It is a similar antagonism to that in the religious South of India over who is greater, Shiva or Vishnu.

The foremost newspapers of Poona have never missed a chance of attacking, on the one hand, the cherished principles of Gandhi and, on the other, showering doubtful encomiums upon some stale pickings of his theories. On the occasion of one of the anniversaries of Tilak's death, there appeared in the *Kesari* of Poona an article occupying seven columns, which can be regarded as characteristic of the total insincerity of the conversion of Maharashtra to Gandhi's views and its perpetual desire to throw contumely and derision upon some of the best principles of Gandhi's teachings which never took deep root in Maharashtrian soil. It was stated in the article that the politics of Tilak were genuinely anti-British and not only seemingly as Gandhi's were: that Gandhi, at bottom, was a friend of the British, unlike Tilak; that among Gandhi's friends British men and women preponderated, that his admirers were more British than Indian. In all Gandhi's doings there was a jugglery of asceticism, a wild fancy for miracles so far as they were possible in the political field, an alluring legerdemain which Tilak always disdained. This article though written in more recent times, furnishes a wonderful key to the non-receptivity of the Maratha mind to the essence of Gandhiji's teachings.

It would be foolish to account for this hostility wholly on the ground of communal aversion. Deep-seated beneath is an essential incompatibility between the Maratha mind as moulded by Tilak's doctrines and Gandhi's teachings. If only the Marathas had stood up to their natural impulse instead of whimpering and submitting to the fascinating flattery of Gandhi's doctrines, their position in public life today would have been infinitely higher than it is, apart from the respect and admiration they would have commanded in India and outside.

With the apparent conquest of Maharashtra, Gandhi's task became infinitely easier. Occasionally the Maratha pricked him—he does so even now—but they were mere pin-pricks. A strong band of Maratha youths found in Gandhi's movement an opportunity for taking up what they called a constructive effort of reform. One of them, an intrepid youth of sacrificing emotion, founded a rustic school within a few miles of Poona; another started an orphanage. These attempts appear to show the desire of the Maratha mind to graft on Gandhi's theories, activities allied to the practical Maratha genius. These endeavours, though they had temporarily the appearance of galvanizing Poona into a great effort, all failed in the end, because their basis was all effervescent emotion, having no permanent link with the inherited and cherished sentiments of the community. Gandhi had started an ashram at Ahmedabad, why not start something similarly big in Poona? A Mahavidyalaya was started and named after Tilak. For a long time the promoters cast about for something befitting the new age. It had to be something different from European education. It must have nothing to do with Bombay University; the medium cannot be English. The degrees cannot be called Bachelor of Arts and so on. What was to be the course of studies? One proposal was that it should be Vedic research in fitting memory of Tilak's colossal scholarship, but that was found to be too deep and full of learning for the ordinary man. A modern popular college cannot live on research into what humanity spoke and wrote centuries ago; it must be concerned with something having living contact with our age. Shall it be Ayurveda, the ancient system of indigenous medicine? It had all the glamour of being Indian. It was besides not difficult to learn as Vedic research was. Tossed between these confusing experiments, the Institution ultimately settled down to evolve a programme which was neither European nor Indian, neither useful nor progressive; neither practical nor scholarly, and the institution gradually deteriorated into a fourth-rate school, notwithstanding the holding of yearly convocations, delivery of addresses and the maintenance of a substantial-looking library, housed in a building of much dignity and architectural beauty. During recent times, however, after the craze to imitate Gandhi's achievements had died out, new leaders came up to work the institution. They dropped all grandiloquent or

glamorous attributes or epithets and succeeded in maintaining a well-equipped seminary for Sanskrit learning. Some of these leaders likewise established Ayurvedic institutions; first a popular hospital and later a college which soon developed a regular course of studies holding equal rank with the allopathic system of medicine. These efforts are full of promise and it is not unlikely that in due course they will evolve a real Mahavidyalaya, more deserving of this epithet than its empty analogue of previous time raised in empty imitation of Gandhi's achievements in Gujerat.

Tilak's Death to Ahmedabad Congress Session (1920-1921)

IN OR about the month of June 1920, the air was humming with rumours that King George of England was proposing to send the Prince of Wales to India. The news was received here with mixed feelings. In some circles, it was accepted as an augury of an improvement in the tense political situation. The Congress circles were, however, deeply sceptical and, in this situation, I remember attending a meeting of important leaders in Bombay to consider the question. They were mostly senior men but I was invited to attend to put forward the views of the younger generation along with Jamnadas Dwarkadas, then prominent in Home Rule League circles. My diary entry of 22 June 1920, reads as follows:

Meeting in Narottam Morarji's office. Present, Gandhi, Malaviya, Chandavarkar, Natarajan, Lallubhai Samaldas, Kailasnath Haksar, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and myself. Lively discussion. Manifesto resolved on to be drafted by Chandavarkar about the reception to the Prince of Wales. Interesting talk with His Highness Madhavrao Scindia of Gwalior.

This talk with His Highness of Gwalior was under peculiar circumstances. As representing the younger people, I was asked to state my views first and I made very strong comments about the impropriety of the Prince's visit at a time when, owing to the tension in the country, the visit was most likely to meet a very hostile reception. His Highness the Scindia of Gwalior sat next to me and after finishing my speech, as I sat down, he whispered into my ear in mellifluous

Hindustani, "जायकरसाब, आब बहोत गरम रोटी खाते हो, जरा थंडी रोटी खाना".* As I did not quite understand the inner meaning of these words, he said to me, "Come and have tea with me tomorrow at my Worli residence." I went there the next day and was taken into His Highness's room. He dismissed all his servants and attendants and we two remained alone. He had a big map of India hanging on the wall and, taking a paper pointer, he asked me, "Have you considered the question as to what would happen if the British were to leave India some day? Have you political men given any thought to this possibility?" I replied, "Your Highness, the British will never leave India of their own accord and this situation has not received our attention." To that he replied, "Some day they will, because public feeling, both in India and England, will become too insistent on their departure. What then?" I said, "I have not considered the question because the possibility appears to be very remote." He replied, "I have considered the question and I can assure you that, if that event happens and there is commotion in the country, I can do this" and pointing to Saharanpur in the map he said, "एक पाव सहारनपुरपर, दूसरा, पूनेपर दरम्यानका मुलुख मैं आपके गवर्नमेंटके लीये सुरक्षित रखूंगा" (One foot on Saharanpur and the other in Poona. The territory between these two terminuses, I shall keep safe for the benefit of our Government). He said this in such a serious tone that I was surprised that His Highness, who had the reputation of being ultra loyal to the British power, should have these thoughts safely reposed in his mind. He had, a few months before, made a present of a ship, significantly called *Loyalty*, to help the British power in the war. From that day onwards, I changed my notions about His Highness and later discovered many indications that, in spite of the appearance of loyalty, His Highness always held patriotic views which would have done credit to any political leader—a fact of which Malaviya assured me later from his intimate contact with His Highness.

On 1 August 1920, an incident occurred of the gravest consequence to India—the death of Tilak at the Sardar Griha in Bombay. We knew that he had been lying ill for some time as a result of a chill caught in a motor-car drive but that his death was so near nobody had suspected. He was semi-conscious for a couple of days before his death and when I

* "Jayakar Sab you eat your bread too hot; eat it a little colder."

visited him on the 29th, he could hardly speak coherently. Excellent medical and other arrangements were made for his relief; many rich friends in Bombay organized public prayers for his recovery and the esteem which the public evinced for him during his illness was unprecedented. But all this proved fruitless and he expired in the early hours of Sunday the 1st of August.

Bombay accorded him a grand funeral. A special train was run by the G. I. P. Railway to enable his friends from up-country to reach Bombay in time for the funeral. The idea of cremating his remains in Poona, which some of his friends had started, had to be abandoned in the face of the insistent demand of his Bombay friends. Special permission of the Commissioner of Police was sought for a cremation on the Chowpatty sands which was given after some higgling relating to the condition that the permission was to be regarded as a special concession and not as a precedent and no claim of any kind was to be made by the public to the land on which the cremation would take place.

The whole city of Bombay went into mourning. I placed a wreath on his body and accompanied the procession which started from the Sardar Griha at about 2 p.m. Despite a gentle drizzle which descended on the procession while it went through the popular routes of the city, people accompanied the procession in large numbers until it reached the Chowpatty sands. In many places on the way, there was fervent adoration of the mortal remains of the patriot and after the procession reached its destination, the body was cremated in sandalwood after a few speeches had been delivered, recounting the great services of the patriot and the great loss India had sustained by his unexpected demise. In obedience to the Hindu custom, Tilak's ashes were removed to Poona on the night of 2 August in a special train in a sandalwood box and were formally taken in procession to his residence at the Gaekwar Wada. Later, the ashes were taken to Prayag on 8 August by his eldest son and they found a final resting place in the confluence of the holy rivers there.

Rumours were current in Bombay that Tilak had warned his friends before his death against the excesses of the non-cooperation movement, which Gandhi was then contemplating, but there is no authentic proof of such talks except one or two references in later publications. For instance, N. C. Kelkar

in his history of Tilak's life (published in Marathi in Poona in 1928, Vol. 3 Part VI, page 65) records an incident that occurred a few weeks before Tilak's death. A public man called on him and invited him to preside at a Labour Conference, which Tilak had to decline owing to ill health. On that occasion when the talk turned on non-cooperation, Tilak was asked his views. He observed, "Who will not have faith in non-co-operation, but the main question is what kind of non-co-operation it should be. It is not advisable that any doctrine should be preached far in advance of the people's readiness and preparation. A leader should be only a little in advance of the people and should endeavour to take them with him with ready willingness. He should not drag his followers behind him. When the people are ready and willing, why non-cooperation but even the Sinn Fein movement may be possible." About the details of the programme he proceeded to observe that "the Liberal leaders would not join us, with the result that, if we resigned from the Legislative Councils in a spirit of non-cooperation, these Liberal leaders would claim to represent the country. If the generality of the people are not ready to give willing and combined support, a mere high idealistic principle will be of no avail. It is all right for us to preach in England that all political reforms should be boycotted till the Punjab wrongs are avenged, but care must be taken to see whether the army of fighters for the public cause is ready to combine for the fight."

Another reference to this matter, showing principally the discordant views of these two great men—Tilak and Gandhi—is contained in a letter of Gandhi, which has now appeared in Tendulkar's life of Gandhi (Vol. 2, page 63) an extract from which I am taking the liberty to quote with due acknowledgment to Tendulkar. Gandhi wrote:

A strange anonymous letter has been received by me admiring me for having taken up a cause that was dearest to Lokamanya's heart, telling me that his spirit was residing in me and that I must prove a worthy follower of his. The letter, moreover, admonishes me not to lose heart in the prosecution of the Swarajya programme, and finishes off by accusing me of imposture in claiming to be politically a disciple of the late Gokhale. I wish the correspondent will throw off the slavish habit of writing anonymously. We, who are developing the Swaraj spirit, must cultivate the courage of fearlessly speaking out our mind. The subject matter of the letter, however, being of public importance,

demands a reply. I cannot claim the honour of being a follower of the late Lokamanya. I admire him like millions of his countrymen for his indomitable will, his vast learning, his love of the country and above all the purity of his private life and great sacrifice. Of all the men of modern times, he captivated most the imagination of his people. He breathed into us the spirit of Swaraj. No one perhaps realised the evil of the existing system of Government as Mr. Tilak did. And, in all humility, I claim to deliver his message to the country as truly as the best of his disciples. I am conscious that my method is not Mr. Tilak's method and that is why I have still difficulty with some of the Maharashtra leaders, but I sincerely think that Mr. Tilak did not disbelieve my method. I enjoyed the privilege of his confidence, and his last word to me in the presence of several friends was, just a fortnight before his death, that mine was an excellent method if the people could be persuaded to take to it. But he said, he had doubts. I know no other method, I can only hope, when the final test comes, the country will be proved to have assimilated the method of non-violent non-cooperation. Nor am I unaware of my limitations. I cannot lay claim to scholarship. I have not his powers of organisation, I have no compact disciplined party to lead, and having been an exile for 23 years, I cannot claim the experience that the Lokamanya had of India. Two things we had in common to the fullest measure—love of the country and the steady pursuit of Swaraj. I can assure the anonymous writer that, yielding to none in my reverence for the memory of the deceased, I will march side by side with the foremost of the Lokamanya's disciples in the pursuit of Swaraj.

Discipleship, however, is a sacred and personal matter. I fell at Dadabhai's feet in 1888, but he seemed to be too far away from me. I would be as son to him, not disciple. A disciple is more than a son. Discipleship is a second birth. It is a voluntary surrender. In 1896 I met almost all the known leaders of India in connection with my South African mission. Justice Ranade awed me. I could hardly talk in his presence. Badruddin Tyabji fathered me, and asked me to be guided by Ranade and Pherozeshah. The latter became a patron. His will had to be law. He taught me to take orders. He did not make me his disciple. He did not even try.

I worshipped Dr. Bhandarkar with his wise face. But I could not find him a place on that little throne. It was still unoccupied. I had many heroes, but no king.

It was different with Gokhale, I cannot say why. I met him at his quarters on the college ground. It was like meeting an old friend, or better still, a mother, after long separation. His gentle face put me at ease in a moment. His minute inquiries about myself and my doings in South Africa at once enshrined him in my heart. And, as I parted from him, I said to myself, "You are my man." In 1901, on my second return from South Africa we came closer still. He simply 'took me

in hand', and began to fashion me. He was concerned about how I spoke, dressed and walked and ate. My mother was not more solicitous about me than Gokhale. There was no reserve between us. It was really a case of love at first sight, and it stood the severest strain in 1913. He seemed to me all I wanted as a political worker—pure as crystal, gentle as a lamb, brave as a lion and chivalrous to a fault. It does not matter to me that he may not have been any of these things. It was enough for me that I could discover no fault in him to cavil at. He was and remains for me the most perfect man on the political field. Not that we had no differences. We differed even in 1901 in our views on social customs, viz. widow remarriage. We discovered differences in our estimate of Western civilization. He frankly differed from me in my extreme views on non-violence. But these differences mattered neither to him nor to me. Nothing could put us asunder. It were blasphemous to conjecture what would have happened if he were alive today. I know that I would have been working under him. I have made this confession because the anonymous letter hurt me, when it accused me of imposture about my political discipleship. Had I been remiss in my acknowledgment to him who is now dumb? I thought that I must declare my faithfulness to Gokhale, especially when I seemed to be living in a camp which the Indian world calls the opposite.

The main thought in this letter, that Gandhi was conscious that his method was different from Tilak's, receives confirmation from Tilak's own statement of his views, almost amounting to a conflict. Some of his views about Gandhi and non-cooperation were expressed by Tilak during his last illness in Bombay. In a collection of reminiscences of Tilak published in Marathi in Poona in the year 1924-25 by Sadashiv Vaman Bapat occurs the following instance:

This was a meeting at Sardar Griha, a fortnight before Tilak's death. Gandhi, Shaikat Ali and some other leaders were present. Tilak held the view that Non-cooperation would be more effective if only a few representative men practised it. Gandhi was of the opinion that Non-Cooperation is perfectly constitutional. Tilak replied: "I consider armed revolt also constitutional. The only difficulty is, at present it is not possible. If anyone were to assure me that armed revolt would be successful to the extent of even eight annas in the rupee, I would start the revolt, trusting God to give me success to the extent of the remaining eight annas. But today, to the extent of even four annas, we are not prepared and there is no certainty." This talk continued, but no decision was arrived at. Shaikat Ali was seated between Gandhi and Tilak. He held the hands of both and said: "We want both of you,

I will be a link between you two." It was after 8 or 10 days.

The next meeting after this, perhaps the last one, was when Tilak was seriously ill and not in his senses. He saluted Gandhi when he entered the room, and said: "When did you come?" He was trying to speak something but could not do so. Then Gandhi went out, at the request of the medical men and after some time he sent Baburao Gokhale inside and asked whether Tilak had any message to give him. Baburao came in and put this question to Tilak but he could not make any reply.

In the same publication the author records another reminiscence narrated by the late A. R. Ajaonkar, the eminent Marathi Scholar:

Tilak asked me: "What is Gandhi's caste?" I replied. "Gandhi is a Vaishya by caste and a Vaishnav by religion." Tilak looked surprised and replied: "It is strange that up to now I did not know Gandhi's religion. People will laugh at my ignorance about such a great man. I was under the impression that Gandhi was a Jain, because all his opinions and teachings savour of the Jain religion—Non-violence, Satyagraha, fasting etc. All these are more in keeping with Jain teachings than the Hindu religion. But these means are of no use in politics, which is required to change its attitude from time to time. Exalted religious principles or abstract doctrines about truth are not of much value in the present political game. I don't think that Satyagraha and Fasting will have the least effect upon the mind of our rulers who are adepts in political warfare. We must use against them the same means as they use against us and as their tactics change, so must ours. Take for instance, one of Gandhi's weapons, viz. 'Hartal'. Gandhi shudders at the word 'bloodshed', but who can guarantee that 'Hartal' will not lead to bloodshed contrary to his wishes. Because, Hartal, if successful, diminishes the prestige of Government. Therefore, Officials will try every means to break the Hartal. They will use domination and force upon shop-keepers. This will cause altercation with other shop-keepers, who do not open their shops. People will gather to watch the quarrel and the police on the watch will interfere, break the crowd and if people do not disperse by peaceful means, shooting will occur and a few people would be wounded."

In the same book is a reminiscence of D. B. Kalelkar:

Tilak once described Gandhi's campaign as follows:

A ship on the seas makes progress towards the Polar Star keeping it in view as a guide, but it does not wish to reach the Polar Star. Similarly, a religious ideal may be a very high guide but there must be a practical ideal in our political activities. A mere high religious

ideal does not prove very useful in practical politics. By all means keep the Polar Star in view, but remember that you are not going to get on to the Star.

Bapat's publication further records (Vol. 3 p. 127, English version) that the views of the two leaders were perhaps in the most severe conflict on the question of Khilafat:

Tilak wanted the national movement of India to keep entirely free from all contamination with any theological or foreign political questions. He foresaw, as if by prophetic vision, the frightful consequences resulting from accepting the Khilafat dispute and he warned us all against it. To those Hindu nationalists who said that they did not believe a word of this Khilafat but still had agreed to agitate for it only to secure the friendship and active co-operation of the Muslims in our national fight for freedom, Tilak had only one reply that if the Hindus think that they will succeed in deceiving the Muslims, they will soon be disillusioned and will find that they will succeed in deceiving themselves only but not the Muslims, who are very shrewd at the diplomatic table. Let us not, therefore, confound issues. Let us seek Muslim cooperation on the broad national question of Swaraj. In that, by all means, give them special privileges if these will satisfy them and bring them into the Congress fold, but never seek to introduce Theology into our politics.

The death of Tilak on 1 August 1920 removed from Indian politics the main and principal opponent of Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and it is significant that "The scheme of the N. C. O. [Non-Cooperation] was formally inaugurated on the 1st of August," i.e. the same day as witnessed the death of Tilak.

After Tilak's death, there were several public meetings in Bombay to honour his memory and I attended several of them, notably a meeting held by the Bombay Students' Brotherhood. I also wrote a letter to the *Bombay Chronicle* in response to the wishes of its Editors. It is not possible to include all this matter in this narrative but one tribute worth reproducing is contained in a contribution I made to the *Indu Prakash* of Bombay within a month of Tilak's death. I quote below an extract from that communication:

Tribute to his memory is due first as a scholar of deep erudition, keen insight, strong imagination and close research—all practised in an atmosphere of reserve and modesty, which always surround the life

of a true scholar. Apart from his political achievement in being the embodiment of the nation's past efforts and the head and front of its present will and struggle for a free and greater life, this link of scholarship attaches to him in sweet and gentle admiration. The scholar's life and achievement are beyond the region of passion and rancour, and the light he sheds on Truth by his research and discoveries receive an applause even from minds which do not always accord their approval to his political teachings.

To the student world Bal Gangadhar Tilak must always remain an adorable figure, preaching from the lofty height of his intellect, to which his vast creative power, his strong and self-reliant national spirit, typifying the reawakened mind of India had raised him. The flexibility of his mind, his vision of future possibilities, his love of freedom of action, and his exertion to transmute into a national purpose, the wildness of individual efforts, are the greatest achievements he has left behind. In Philosophy and Archaeology, the boldness of his conceptions are only intelligible to those who knew personally his calm, silent and unflinching courage and his unwavering purpose. Behind his roughness of exterior, with which he often delighted to surround himself, there existed one of the gentlest and softest of natures, deeply imbued with the reverence and modesty of a truly Indian mind, with almost a sense of personal humiliation, at the present subjection of his country.

He saw the country through the halo of her past, her epics and philosophies, as a mighty nation that will remain great in spite of her temporary subjection. His unquenchable faith in the inborn greatness of his race and the dignity of their future destiny was largely coloured by his deep study of ancient Indian literature. His fine capacity for democratic leadership and his diplomacy, which, to some minds, seemed almost western in its agility, were, to his friends, the outcome of his truly Indian sensibilities, characterized by dignity of poise.

Perhaps his greatest service to the cause of his people was that he taught them to court suffering as the true test of leadership. In that again his mind was peculiarly Indian. For, as we are aware, in the Hindu scriptures, nobody is great unless his life has been filled, by voluntary effort, with an adequate measure of suffering. Tilak's greatest virtue is that he taught the people to associate these spiritual ideals with the materialism of dusty politics.

He has gone away at a period which is the most crucial in the history of the country and when the country is passing through most troubled and poignant hours. Questions are raised which his knowledge of Indian character would have helped to solve. The void he leaves behind will take a long time to fill up. But it is perhaps the characteristic virtue of his teaching that men will soon grow up in his mould, though perhaps not in his stature.

Bombay had not much time to mourn this loss, for on

1 September came the Congress at Calcutta. I attended it and took a prominent part in the proceedings. The following entries in my Diary will be found interesting:

Wednesday, 1 September: Left for Calcutta at 10 a.m. in the Congress special train to attend the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and his brother Kanji were in my compartment. Jinnah, his wife, Baptista, Kelkar, Deshpande of Belgaum, Umar Sobhani, Velkar, Sathaye and others were travelling by the same train. A very pleasant journey.

Friday, 3 September: Reached Calcutta at 3 p.m. Put up at the Grand Hotel. Informal conferences at President Lajpatrai's residence; warm discussion on Non-Cooperation; Most of the leaders opposed to Gandhi's programme, though in favour of its principle.

Saturday, 4 September: In Calcutta. Congress first day. President's speech, long, forcible and non-committal on the Non-Co-operation question. Informal conferences like yesterday. Another warm discussion.

Sunday, 5 September: In Calcutta. Elected to Subjects Committee. Other resolutions than Non-Co-operation finished. Discussion keen about Non-Co-operation; vigorous and warm yet in good spirit. President Lajpatrai very pleasant, sometimes too yielding, too prone to leave questions of order to the audience.

Monday, 6 September: In Calcutta. Congress second day. Resolutions carried. Subjects Committee met afterwards. Keen discussion on subject of Non-Co-operation. Most leaders opposed. Baptista uncompromising. Gandhi's following was made up of leaders to whom loyalty to Gandhi and his Non-Co-operation appeared to be of more value than the unity of the Congress. Gujerathi rank and file too favourable to Non-Co-operation to be discriminating. Gandhi knows his strength. Therefore he is unusually obdurate. Discussion adjourned till tomorrow.

Tuesday, 7 September: At Calcutta. Subjects Committee met again. Bipinchandra Pal's amendment accepting principles of Non-Co-operation, appointing a Mission to England asking for complete Swaraj. Committee appointed to devise Programme of Sawaraj suited to several provinces, in the meanwhile Gandhi's Programme recommended for consideration of the country. Adoption of non-controversial details of the Non-Co-operation Programme. Division; Gandhi won by small majority of about 12. Moderates and Besantites voted against Pal's amendment and this swelled Gandhi's majority.

Wednesday, 8 September: Calcutta Congress Session. Debate in the Congress on Non-Co-operation. I spoke supporting Pal's resolution. Speech well received.

Thursday, 9 September: At Calcutta. Voting day. Gandhi's resolution carried Only Central Provinces and Burma against.

Friday, 10 September: Left Calcutta for Bombay. Reached Bombay on Sunday, the 12th.

The most important resolution at the Calcutta Session was the one dealing with Non-Co-operation, moved by Gandhi. This was the very first resolution on Non-Co-operation as conceived by Gandhi's mind as its author. The details therefore will be found interesting even in these times. Gandhi's Resolution was:

In view of the fact that on the Khilafat question both the Indian and Imperial Governments have signally failed in their duty towards the Muslims of India and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to them and that it is the duty of every non-Muslim Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Muslim brother in his attempt to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him;

And in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of the April of 1919, both the said Governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab and punish officers guilty of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them, and have exonerated Sir Michael O'Dwyer who proved himself directly responsible for most of the official crimes and callous to the sufferings of the people placed under his administration, and that the debate in the House of Lords betrayed a woeful lack of sympathy with the people of India, and systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab, and that the latest Viceregal Pronouncement is proof of the entire absence of repentance in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab;

This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of the two above-mentioned wrongs, and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of Swarajya. This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course left open for the people of India but to approve of and to adopt the policy of progressive non-violent Non-Co-operation inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi until the said wrongs are righted and Swarajya is established;

And inasmuch as beginning should be made by the classes who have hitherto moulded and represented public opinion and inasmuch as Government consolidates its power through the titles and honours bestowed on the people, through schools controlled by it, its Law Courts and its Legislative Councils, and inasmuch as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice compatible with the establishment of the desired

object, this Congress earnestly advises

- (a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in Local Bodies;
- (b) refusal to attend Government Levies, Durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials, and in their honour;
- (c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by Government, and, in place of such schools and colleges, the establishment of national schools and colleges in the various Provinces;
- (d) gradual boycott of British Courts by lawyers and litigants, and the establishment of private Arbitration Courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes;
- (e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;
- (f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reform Councils, and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice offer themselves for election;
- (g) boycott of foreign goods;

And inasmuch as Non-Co-operation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice, without which no nation can make real progress, and inasmuch as an opportunity should be given, in the very first stage of Non-Co-operation, to every man woman and child for such discipline and sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of Swadeshi in piecegoods on a vast scale and, inasmuch as the existing mills of India with indigenous capital and control do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the Nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, this Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving handspinning in every house and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement.

It will be seen that this Resolution, though the first of its kind, elaborated all the details of Gandhis' Non-Co-operation Programme in the several departments of public activity and was a culmination of the scheme formally inaugurated on 1 August (the date of Tilak's death) with the help of the Ali Brothers. This scheme, on which Gandhi incessantly worked for several weeks, was an open departure of the Congress from the traditional constitutional paths and it was considered that it was such a big issue as to require a Special Session of the Congress. Such a Session was intended originally to

be held at Bezwada but was later transferred to Calcutta, because, it was thought that, down in the South at Bezwada, Gandhi's Non-Co-operation Programme would not receive the same support as in Calcutta, where the Muslim element was preponderant and would favour Gandhi's Non-Co-operation, in consequence of the provocation given to Muslims in respect of the Khilafat decision of the Government of England.

Gandhi's Resolution met with very strong opposition in the Subjects Committee at Calcutta. The meeting was held on 7 September at Calcutta in the rooms of the Indian Association and the discussion lasted over six hours, after which it was decided to adopt the Resolution on Non-Co-operation. All the delegates, elected on the Subjects Committee, numbering about 300, attended and a large number of them took part in the discussion. The speeches were strong and enlivened here and there by sharp passages-at-arms. Gandhi took a very strong attitude from the very beginning and he stood by his Motion firm like a rock, unmoved by friendly appeals, suppliant entreaties or hostile threats. All amendments to Gandhi's Resolution proposed by Das, Bipinchandra Pal and others were lost and Gandhi's Resolution was carried in the Subjects Committee by majority, mostly consisting of delegates from outside Bengal.

The plenary Congress Session was on 8 September and, before Gandhi moved his Resolution, Ashutosh Choudhary, who had then retired from a judgeship and come into political life, moved an adjournment of the Congress till the winter Session. He said:

There is considerable opposition to the Resolution on Non-Co-operation brought forward before the Congress... I know the feeling and the volume of opposition against it... Having regard to that feeling, it is just to yourselves, and to everyone not prepared to accept the Resolution as put forward, that further time should be given to consider the Resolution.

This proposal was seconded but was lost by an overwhelming majority.

Gandhi then moved his Resolution, the details of which have been stated above. It was a very long speech which he made in support of the Resolution but only brief extracts from it can be reproduced in this narrative. He said:

I am aware, and more than aware, of the responsibility that rests on my shoulders in being privileged to move this Resolution before this great assembly. I am aware that my difficulty and also yours, increases if you are to adopt the Resolution. I am aware that the adoption of this Resolution will mark a definite change in the policy that this country has hitherto adopted about the vindication of the rights that belong to it and its honour. I am aware that a large number of our respected leaders who have given their time and attention, in a manner which it has not been my privilege to give, to our own motherland, are ranged against me. I am fully aware that they feel, out of a sense of duty, that they must resist this attempt to revolutionize the policy of the country practically at any cost. Knowing these difficulties and realizing my responsibility and giving all respect that I am capable of giving to the leaders of the country, I stand before you in the fear of God and with a sense of duty towards my country, to commend this Resolution to you for your hearty acceptance.

Non-Co-operation, as you will see from the Resolution itself, is a new policy conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice. Discipline demands humility, obedience, respect and patient hearing to a speaker. I have learnt, by bitter experience through a period close upon 30 years, one supreme lesson, namely to conserve my anger, to control it, and just as heat conserved is transmuted into energy, so also anger conserved and controlled can result in a power that becomes irresistible throughout the world and I want my country to control its anger at this critical period in our history.... I have been told that I am doing nothing but wrecking the Congress.... But the Congress is not a party organization, but provides a platform for all shades of opinion, for all groups, for all parties. A minority may look forward to translate itself into a majority if it, in its opinion, commends itself to the country. If I find myself in a minority, you will not find me going away from the Congress, but I will try and convert the minority into a majority.

Then Gandhi mentioned the details of the Programme about Khilafat and said:

The Mussalmans of India cannot remain as honourable men and followers of the Faith of their Prophet, if they do not vindicate their honour at any cost. About the Punjab, the less I say the better. The whole story of that unfortunate happening is before you now. The Congress has to vindicate its honour and enforce candid repentance before receiving a single gift from the Government, however rich it may be. Therefore, it is that I have ventured to place before you a scheme of Non-Co-operation. I would ask you to reject any other scheme of Non-Co-operation except as detailed by me... unless you deliberately come to the conclusion that it is a better scheme. I make

bold to reiterate the statement that you can gain Swaraj in one year under my conditions by the enforcement of this Resolution. There is another way before the country save Non-Co-operation, that is to draw the sword, but India does not possess the sword and if it had possessed it, I know that India would not have listened to the Gospel of Non-Co-operation.... Two things indispensable in this programme are, discipline and self-sacrifice.... I want to test whether the country has really evolved a national spirit. Whether at the altar of the nation the country is ready to dedicate its riches, its children, its all. If the country is ready to do this without reservation, I promise Swaraj in no time..... I hold real substantial unity between the Hindus and Muslims as infinitely superior. I have to choose temporary chaos, anarchy, neglect of the literary training of my children, the closing up of Courts and therefore temporary distress for Court-goers, the shutting up of the legislative activity.

Then Gandhi described in great detail his idea of the boycott of Councils upon which there was a greater division between him and his opponents than on any other item.

Gandhi then explained his speech briefly in Hindi. Kitchlew of Amritsar seconded the Resolution. Pandit Gokarnath Misra, in opposing the Resolution, said that it was against the Congress creed, which so long had not meant to paralyse the Government.

Shyamlal Nehru proposed that the word 'gradual' wherever it occurred in Gandhi's Resolution, should be deleted and added that Gandhi promises Swaraj in nine months, but if his amendment, namely, deletion of the word 'gradual' is accepted, Gandhi promises to give Swarajya in six months, nay, even in three months.

After a few other speeches, B. C. Pal moved his amendment to the effect that the Prime Minister of England be asked to receive a Mission from India to lay before him the statement of India's grievances, coupled with a demand for immediate Autonomy, and, in case of his failure to receive the Mission or to replace the Reforms Act of 1919 by a measure granting full Autonomy to India, a policy of such active non-co-operation be adopted as would leave no doubt in the minds of the British people that India could no longer be governed as a Dependency. In the meanwhile, the country be recommended to give consideration to Gandhi's Programme through a representative Committee and carry on preparatory propaganda in that behalf. They could not possibly paralyse

Government by Non-Co-operation as proposed by Gandhi. He related the history of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal a decade back and how it had failed. With the memory of that failure, he wanted to be cautious, to take only one step forward, viz. to tell those who were responsible for the Government of India to come to terms with them, first to send a deputation to the Prime Minister of England, and then when their demand was rejected, as it was sure to be, to take up Gandhi's programme.

Pal had a strong following. Bengal was strongly in his support; many leaders from different Provinces were also in favour of Pal's amendment. For instance, Jinnah, Baptista and myself from Bombay, Satyamurti from Madras and also Malaviya, and Das. Mrs. Besant opposed both the Resolutions and the amendment and stated that the British Government was so interwoven with our society that Non-Co-operation, if successful, would throw the country into anarchy.

A few extracts from the speech I made on the occasion in support of Pal's amendment are here reproduced:

We all feel that under the stress of the present circumstances and for the reasons expressed in Pal's amendment and also in Gandhi's resolution, Non-Co-operation is an urgent remedy calculated, in the opinion of a large majority of our countrymen, to achieve our purpose. The difference, however, comes in when we propose for the immediate adoption of the entire country, a cut-and-dry Programme. What I feel is that the people are entitled to demand a little more time to prepare themselves, to organize their forces, to understand the right spirit of Non-Co-operation and to train themselves in the manifestation of that spirit. Remember, that, for the first time in the politics of this country, we are introducing the moral element of discipline, self-control and self-sacrifice, to use Gandhi's own expressions. In other words, our politics is to be spiritualized according to the visions which Gandhi has conceived. This change, however, to be successful must take some time if it is to be a natural one. Throughout the whole period spread over 35 sittings, this Congress has preached co-operation with Government. You cannot reverse this process by sudden changes adopted at a single sitting.... The requisite self-control has still to come.... I warn those, in all friendliness, who claim to be the followers of Gandhi and to have imbibed his spirit of Non-violent Non-Co-operation to remember that the ascetic discipline and self-control which have characterized Gandhi's life can only be the outcome of many years of effort and training. Some of us, therefore—humbler men unused to such asceticism and discipline, plead that people should have more time to

understand and more liberty to adjust the Programme according to the wants, requirements, and the situation of each Province; . . . You cannot conceive of one uniform plan of Non-Co-operation which will suit the whole of India. The utmost that the Congress can do at present is to recognize the principle of Non-Co-operation, leaving it to the leaders of each Province to devise means to practise such forms of it as will achieve the end without violence or disorder.

To accept and start immediately the whole of his [Gandhi's] programme is to court irritation, disorder, and perhaps eventual violence; and Gandhi threatens, on the occurrence of violence, to retire from his activities and even to assist Government to suppress Non-Co-operation. This ought to awaken us to the necessity of greater preparation, greater training and greater adaptability to his programme. It is therefore necessary to proceed with caution.

Many other speeches were made doubting the efficacy of the Programme and disapproving the hurry with which it was being launched on the country and suggested means for gradual advance. Yet, as stated above, by a narrow majority the Subjects Committee had passed Gandhi's Resolution, in which a graduated scale of boycott was advocated. To me, it seemed that the atmosphere then created as a result of the obdurate behaviour of the Government was such that Non-Co-operation was inevitable and though many men, opposed to that Programme, had so far been loyal followers of Gandhi, they thought it their duty to sound a warning against a precipitous advance in that doctrine. What success the different details of the Non-Co-operation Programme achieved in later times will be narrated in the subsequent pages of this narrative.

The success achieved by Gandhi in the Subjects Committee was fully deserved by reason of his activities since August 1920 to spread the Gospel of Non-Co-operation. He had captured the various Provincial Congress Committees, who, after due deliberation and some with doubt and hesitation, gave their opinions on the Non-Co-operation Programme. A few instances might be mentioned below to show how, at this date, the Non-Co-operation Programme with full details had received, not the unanimous, but only the divergent support of the several Congress Committees.

The Andhra Congress Committee and the Punjab Committee recommended, in spite of wide opposition, the adoption of the policy of Non-Co-operation but would defer the Pro-

gramme for some time. Bengal held that, under the then conditions, Non-Co-operation was the only effective weapon left to the people, but the Committee, in common with that of the Central Provinces, did not consider that the boycott of the new Legislative Bodies was necessary. Bihar and Orissa approved of the principle and recommended a Programme suitable to the needs of their Province. Bombay wholeheartedly accepted the principle but would entrust the details to a Committee to be appointed by the Congress. Burma approved but believed that a movement was not practicable in that Province. Madras approved the policy of Non-Co-operation but voted against Gandhi's detailed Programme. Sind approved and framed a Programme in detail in four steps suitable to the requirements of that Province and objected to the military being asked to withdraw. The United Provinces approved and formulated a detailed Programme, adding boycott of the Welcome to the Duke of Connaught.

Gandhi in his final reply to the debate said:

You have now listened to all the speeches. All these speakers have a splendid record of service behind them, but I can tell you that, with all my anxiety to be convinced of any error of judgement or otherwise, I stand convinced that this Programme is capable of being practised today by everyone who is affected by the several items. The introduction of the adjective 'gradual' upon which emphasis has been laid by some speakers makes no difference and notwithstanding that word, the Programme is as practicable as without it. I have not the slightest doubt, even with the experience of 1½ months behind me, that we shall have a fairly good response from the country, but if you have not the ability to enforce it immediately, the introduction of the adjective gives you thinking time.

A large part of Gandhi's speech related to the advocacy of the Khilafat cause and he justified it with the observation that,

If we want to cement the relations between the Hindus and the Mussalmans and if we want them to endure for ever, there is no escape for us but a complete association with them so long as they remain on the right path and adopt honourable means and do not overreach themselves in framing their demands and so long as they do not resort to violence.

My business is finished when I have placed every argument before you... If you pass this Resolution, you will do so with your eyes open, but if you cannot satisfy these conditions, you will not hesitate to reject them.

As I heard Gandhi from near, I thought he had decided to risk the Resolution at whatever cost. That his former associates and those who had led the Congress from stage to stage were opposed to his Resolution, made no difference in his determination to rush the Resolution at that Session of the Congress. I had never seen him more earnest and determined than on this occasion. The result was that Gandhi's Resolution was carried by 1,826 votes against 884 for Mr. Pal's amendment. Punjab, Bombay, Bengal, U. P. and Bihar voted for Gandhi by a huge majority, C. P. and Berar voted against him.

After that, the President, Lajpat Rai, made a long extempore speech. To quote a few extracts from reports of it may be useful:

He rejoiced to find that this assembly had after all found that the country's salvation must come from the country itself and that paltry Reforms tinkering with the administration here and there would not satisfy their souls and could not meet their needs, ... but he thought it would be cowardly on his part to leave this pandal without telling them briefly his views on the great question on which they had passed their Resolution. He might tell them at once that he was absolutely and wholeheartedly in support of Non-Co-operation but, at the same time, he must frankly tell them that he was not convinced that the Programme which they had accepted was the soundest and most effective. He had grave doubts with regard to several of the items on the Programme.

Then he dealt individually with the several boycotts, for instance, of schools, Courts, Councils etc., and added that he was wholeheartedly opposed to the withdrawal of boys from schools and colleges. He yielded to none in his desire for national education ... but after a great deal of study and experience he had come to the conclusion that they could not construct a national system of education without a National Government and that the experiment will fail. He did not know of any history of the world in which any nation had been able by private means to solve the problem of education. It must be solved by the Government of the country which took the revenues of the country and it would be absolutely suicidal, at the present moment, to withdraw their boys and girls from the schools and college in which they were studying. By all means, go on establishing private schools, ... but they would not solve thereby the problem of national education unless they had a National Government. That was an indispensable condition.

As regards the boycott of Courts and the withdrawal of lawyers from the Courts, it seemed to him to be an impracticable proposition. He

was not in love with lawyers, much less with Courts...but he held that the gradual withdrawal of lawyers from Courts was an impracticable proposition. It was impossible for them to avoid British Courts altogether so long as the Government was British.... They would not be able to paralyse the Government, would not be able to make the work of the administration impossible unless they struck at the root of the economic exploitation going on in this country. Although he agreed with the suggestion for the improvement of Swadeshi by the manufacture of piecegoods here, a clause has been added which seemed absolutely impracticable to him, namely, the boycott of foreign goods, and events will prove it to be a failure.

Then he turned to the boycott of Councils. He agreed with Gandhi that in all these Councils there was an insidious poison which might demoralize their men who went there. But what had they been doing on this platform for the last 35 years? The leaders of the nation had been preaching all over with great enthusiasm and gusto about co-operation. In the course of a few months they could not change 315 million of the population of this country from an attitude of co-operation to an attitude of non-co-operation.... He was afraid that the time they had given for washing off what they had written for so many years was very inadequate. For that reason he was entirely in favour of this Programme being considered by a Joint Committee of the best men of this country to work out the details. He did not differ from Gandhi that the two wrongs to be avenged were the injustice relating to Khilafat and to the Punjab, but... he wanted them, in everything they did, to give the first place to Swarajya or complete Self-Government.

He had doubts about the Deputation going to England. He wished to lay emphasis upon the absolute necessity of their carrying on an independent campaign of publicity in Great Britain, America, Japan and France. He urged them for God's sake not to give up that weapon. They may proceed with the Programme of Non-Cooperation and he hoped that within the next three months before the next Congress at Nagpur, they would show the world that they meant what they had said. If they could not show such tangible results, he would call them traitors to the cause of the country.... Now that they had passed that Resolution he wished from the bottom of his heart that Gandhi's Programme might be successful.

He addressed, in conclusion, a powerful appeal to Islam as follows: The honour of the Islamic world was in their keeping, and if they could not preserve that honour, they would be held responsible before God and man. He will consider that Mohamedan to be a false Mohamedan who, having accepted this programme did not go forward with it, did not put his heart, body and soul, his life at the disposal of the Non-Cooperation programme.... At present, the lead in the Non-Cooperation programme must come from the Mohamedans who must be prepared to give a lead to the country, not only in principle but

in enforcing it, and he believed and trusted that they would do so.

A Press correspondent, who had closely followed the proceedings, posed the question, "What would have happened if the Lokamanya were living? Would Mr. Gandhi then have become more amenable to compromise? Would Mr. Tilak have accepted the item in the Gandhi programme over which such a battle raged—the item of boycotting the Councils?"

In the course of a couple of hours, the *Bombay Chronicle* Special Representative heard six interpretations of Tilak's probable attitude regarding Non-Co-operation; and the thought struck him, "Would it not have reduced the political temperature in the Congress Pandal that day, if Heaven had permitted the Lokamanya to cry out from above 'Traitors, Traitors'." The paper observed:

"It was a pity that none of the late Lokamanya's Lieutenants could give an authoritative lead that day to the Maharashtra delegates, much less to the Congress. They said of course "Yes" to the principle of Non-Cooperation and uttered an emphatic "No" to the boycott of Councils. This was not their fault. During Tilak's regime, he had several excellent understudies, but none had been recognized as second-in-charge who could automatically and peacefully step into the place rendered vacant at such an inopportune time. It is true that both Baptista and Kelkar did their best, in their own manner, to press forward the Deccan Congress Democratic Party's view. But Baptista was the victim of alliterative phrases, while Kelkar, the recognised link between the Moderates and Extremists, a man trusted in all sections of political thought, was quietly persuasive and coldly logical. He had been wellknown for his sobriety of judgment, but do a mass of 15,000 people want sobriety of judgment or do they want and insist on having the driving power of fervid enthusiasm?

The newspaper article went on to add a few comments upon Jinnah and myself and the part we played at the Congress Session. About Jinnah it said:

If you want a case to be expounded to you, you are bound some day or other to go to Mr. Jinnah. He possesses, in a remarkable manner, both lucidity of phrase and clarity of vision and although one cannot refer in detail to the Subject-Committee's proceedings which are strictly private, one may be permitted to remark that his speech showing the futility of adopting certain items in the Gandhi programme and urging for a patient examination of the question before action is undertaken,

was remarkably a fine performance.

On my speech the *Chronicle* commented:

A French writer once said of his best friend that the latter was "almost a gentleman, almost a great man". One has to remark about Mr. Jayakar that he has been "almost a nationlist". Bombay readers have had already the benefit of seeing in print a verbatim report of his remarkable speech in the open Congress. It is no exaggeration to say that his was one of the few speeches heard with respect and close attention by an assembly which was no means inclined to accept the words of prudent counsel which he uttered. Elegant in diction, careful in phraseology, Mr. Jayakar is always anxious to be as unequivocal as possible. He is easily the most persuasive, the most lucid and the most attractive of our public speakers but the question is when is he going to accept the responsibilities and the risks of being a leader.

It will thus be seen that leading men including the President, Lajpatrai, were opposed to the programme and against rushing it through at the Congress. But Gandhi won by the sheer force of his personality and argument and what made his success possible was, in some cases, the general loyalty to Gandhi and the obdurate policy of the Government which left practically no alternative. The atmosphere then prevalent was such that Non-Cooperation was inevitable. The Government of India had blindly accepted the findings of the majority Report of the Hunter Committee and were inclined to throw a veil of oblivion over the misdeeds of officials. They had slurred over O'Dwyer's conduct as amounting only to "a grave error of judgment which exceeded the reasonable requirements of the case" and held that "it was based upon an honest but mistaken conception of duty." Montagu himself tamely acquiesced in those recommendations and practically condoned the misdeeds of the Punjab officials and aggravated matters by adding that O'Dwyer was actuated by "honesty of purpose and unflinching adherence to duty." The debate in the House of Commons itself turned upon the supposed wrong and injustice of the punishment inflicted upon Dyer, while in the House of Lords Lord Finlay's motion was regarded as inaccurate, one-sided and false in spirit and substance. Altogether, the debate betrayed the rights and liberties of the Indian people. To these circumstances, may be added one important fact viz. that, with the disappearance of Tilak from the political arena, many felt that there was no leader then available to

oppose Gandhi's programme who was Gandhi's equal in eminence, sacrifice, service and popularity. The feeling, though unexpressed, operated on the minds of many who ultimately gave their adherence to Gandhi's Resolution, though, in most cases, out of sheer compulsion and not without great hesitation and doubt.

Many of us felt at that time that the unusual obduracy on Gandhi's part was the result of a sudden change from co-operation (at Amritsar) to non-co-operation (at Calcutta) and the energy he displayed in his adherence to his views was the usual energy of a neophyte in support of his newly discovered doctrines. Further evidence in support of this view of Gandhi's sudden change now comes to light in N. C. Kelkar's *Life of Tilak* (Vol. III, Part VI, pp. 59 and 60) where Kelkar definitely states that the Manifesto of Tilak's new Democratic Party, prepared by him after consulting some leading men of Gujerat and Sind, was seen and approved by Gandhi before its publication in the *Kesari* of 20 April 1920. This Manifesto contained, *inter alia*, the following proposals:

(a) This party believes in the integration of the Federation of India in the British Commonwealth for the advancement of the cause of humanity and the brotherhood of mankind.

(b) It regards the Montagu Reform Act as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing.

(c) but this party proposes to work the Montagu Reform Act for all it is worth and for accelerating the grant of full Responsible Government, and, for this purpose, it will, without hesitation, offer co-operation or resort to constitutional opposition, whichever may be expedient and best calculated to give effect to the popular will.

The question thus arises that, if Gandhi had approved, on or before 20 April 1920, that the Reforms Act was to be utilized in a spirit of co-operation for all that it was worth, what happened between April and August 1920 which could account for the revolutionary change from co-operation to non-co-operation, except that Tilak, the main opponent of Non-Co-operation, died on 1 August, thereby leaving the way clear to Gandhi to unfurl publicly, with the aid of the Ali brothers, his banner of Non-Co-operation on the very day of Tilak's death.

After the Calcutta Session, Gandhi marched from one stage of Non-Co-operation to another during the period intervening between the Calcutta Congress and its ensuing Session at

Nagpur. During this period momentous changes were taking place in India as well as in England. The attitude of the people on the age-long methods of political agitation were changing. In England this led to very serious consequences. The Sub-Committee appointed by the All-India Congress Committee in May 1920 to present a petition to Parliament on the Punjab tragedy (as stated in a previous Chapter) never moved in the matter. The Congress stopped payment of subsidy to the British Committee (working in London) owing to differences on the question of Reforms. The same differences led to an acrimonious controversy in England between the Congress Deputation and Mrs. Besant. The Labour Party and English friends were lost between the contentions and viewpoints of the two schools of thought. The British Committee declined to be guided by Indian friends and it was in consequence recommended from India that the paper *India* conducted by the British Committee should be discontinued.

While this was happening in England, affairs in India were changing with no less rapidity. On 2 October 1920 the A.I.C.C. met and resolved to raise two Funds, (1) The All-India Tilak Memorial Fund, and (2) the Swarajya Fund, but the Resolution remained unenforced till December 1920. The Calcutta Resolutions on Non-Co-operation were not readily accepted either in Bengal or Maharashtra and a prominent co-worker of Tilak published a short Memorandum contrasting, in parallel columns, how the Calcutta Special Resolutions sought

to divert the energies of the Congress into directions of attaining soul force and moral excellence, losing sight of the political aspects of affairs by avoiding contact with the *de facto* Government. It affords no training ground for acquiring the kind of political-mindedness and temper necessary to carry on a substantial struggle in a peaceful, and yet firm, orderly manner. The Non-Co-operation as preached [at Calcutta] may develop powers of endurance but cannot breed the energy, resourcefulness and practical wisdom necessary for a political struggle. The three boycotts recommended at present are futile and have not at all a distinct political aspect and the tendency of the whole, as evidenced in the proceedings for alteration of the creed of the All-India Home Rule League, now renamed "Swarajya Sabha" would appear towards a return to autocracy and personal rule which is objectionable and against the spirit of the age, though entrusted to a highly developed and moral individual.

This Memorandum was published on 10 December 1920, on

the eve of the Nagpur Congress. It called special attention to the change in the creed of the Home Rule League and the formation of the Swarajya Sabha by Gandhi. The fact was that, in Calcutta, while the fate of Non-Co-operation was hanging in the balance, Gandhi assembled all Home Rule Leaguers and changed the creed of the League into a form later adopted by the Congress at Nagpur. He also changed the name of the League to Swarajya Sabha.

The consequence of this change in the Home Rule League's objects and name was that a very large number of people in Bombay, including Jinnah and myself, resigned from the Home Rule League. Our letter of resignation addressed to the President (Gandhi), Swarajya Sabha, formerly All India Home Rule League, was as follows:

27-10-20

We, the undersigned members of the League, are of opinion that the Constitution adopted by the League in its General Meeting held in the Morarji Hall on the 3rd instant constitutes a fundamental departure from the aims, objects and methods of work hitherto pursued by the League. The new Constitution deliberately omits any reference to the British connection in Clause 2 (1) which lays down the goal of the League and Clause 2 (2) thereof is clearly permissible of unconstitutional and illegal activities provided they are peaceful and effective. We are further of opinion that these changes in the Constitution were made by adopting a procedure contrary to the rules and regulations of the League. We venture to say that your ruling, aiming at validating the said procedure, was both incorrect and arbitrary. We hold to the ideas and methods embodied in the Congress Constitution and we further believe that a body like the League, affiliated as it is to the Indian National Congress, must restrict itself to methods of work which were considered by the Indian National Congress as constitutional.

Anxious as we are to assist the League in its mission of strengthening and furthering the cause of the Indian National Congress, we regret that, owing to the radical alterations recently made in the Constitution, we are unable to remain any longer members of the League.

We, therefore, with great sorrow, tender our resignation of our membership of the League and of such offices thereof as are at present held by any of us.

We remain,
Yours faithfully,

M. A. Jinnah
M. R. Jayakar
Jamnadas Dwarkadas

Hiralal Nanavaty
Nagindas Master
Gulabchand Deochand

Kanji Dwarkadas

K. M. Munshi

R. G. Munsif

M. K. Azad

Morarji Kamdar

Jamnadas Mehta

Hansraj Pragji Thackersey

Chotubhai Vakil

Mangaldas Pakvasa

Chandrashankar Pandya

N. B. Vibhakar

Manilal Nanavaty

Y. M. Pakwasa

Thus my fears, that under its new name and guidance the Home Rule League would soon disappear and the good work which it had done for several years would be destroyed, proved justified. This incident has already been referred to in a previous chapter where I described how I opposed Gandhi becoming the head of the Home Rule League for fear of consequences destructive of the good work of that body.

It was in this atmosphere that the Congress met at Nagpur towards the end of December 1920.

In his Preface to the proceedings of that Session of the Congress, Moonje, its Honorary General Secretary at that time, after tracing the history of events since the split at Surat, referred to the reawakened desire of the Nagpur Nationalists to invite the Congress. He observed:

Another incident happened which was absolutely heart-breaking and practically left us political orphans, namely, that the great Lokamanya breathed his last on the 1st of August 1920. The suddenness of the news of his demise, absolutely unexpected at the time, fell like a thunderbolt on us and thoroughly dumbfounded us for a time. It chilled all the warmth of enthusiasm, but the duty once undertaken and several activities set up for its consummation have now impelled us to pull on, as though in a cold, mechanical way. Throughout the Session this feeling weighed on the mind of Tilak's followers.

Jamnalal Bajaj was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and C. Vijayaraghavacharya of Salem was the President. This Session of the Congress was an eventful one. A large number of delegates attended, more than at any previous Session of the Congress, amounting to 14,582, of whom no less than 1,050 were Muslims and 169 women. Some British friends of India, for instance, Colonel Wedgwood, Mr. Holford Knight and Mr. Ben Spoor, the Labour Leader, also attended as fraternal delegates from the Labour Party of England and conveyed that Party's greetings and sympathy. Lajpatrai, the hesitant President of the Calcutta Special Congress and many

other Congress leaders had, in the meanwhile, changed over to the new doctrine.

Owing to this change in the public feeling during the intervening period, Gandhi obtained many advantages at the Session at Nagpur, the most momentous being that Vijayaraghavacharya, up to then lukewarm towards Non-Co-operation, cautiously co-operated with Gandhi. Similar changes had taken place in Lajpatrai's views from his previous opposition to Non-Co-operation at the Calcutta Session. In the following pages are narrated the details of the changes which had taken place in the minds of these two leading men. Das had brought a contingent of 250 delegates from East Bengal and Assam to undo what had been done at Calcutta in favour of Non-Co-operation. Maharashtra's opposition was not less intense nor less organised. Wedgwood attended the meeting of the Subjects Committee and also Ben Spoor and Holford Knight. Wedgwood put all his force into his argument against Non-Co-operation but nothing availed. Stalwarts like Pal, Malaviya, Jinnah, Khaparde, Das and Lajpatrai appeared to be overpowered. The momentous changes introduced at Nagpur will be described in the following pages, but to anticipate the narrative it might be stated briefly that though the acceptance of the Non-Co-operation Resolution at Nagpur was an event by itself, its vital feature was that the Resolution was moved by Das and seconded by Lajpatrai.

The proceedings at Nagpur, though of far-reaching importance, were not as prolonged as any other ordinary Session of the Congress. They were swift and decisive. The people seemed to be determined not to prolong the agony of indecision, suspense and divisions and to end it as rapidly and as decisively as they could.

The President, Vijayaraghavacharya's speech was a disquisition on the history of the Congress and of constitutional agitation. He had prepared, as an annexe to his Address, a draft Scheme or Statute. He began by proposing a Message to be sent to the King of England and the great people of the world, to the effect that the people of India were now placed by their rulers in an intolerable position and that they were determined forthwith to make their beautiful country fit and safe for her sons and daughters to live in and that any further delay in their achievement of this vital object meant ruin to them and peril to the Empire, if not to the future peace

of the world. The President's draft Scheme contained a Declaration of Fundamental Rights as Indians and as British citizens also. Such a Declaration, he observed, was usual in the Constitutions of many countries. Reference in this behalf can be made to a similar view stated by Motilal Nehru at the Amritsar Congress. But Vijayaraghavacharya supported it with many detailed arguments, including a quotation from Burke as follows:

The rights of men, that is to say, the natural rights of mankind, are indeed sacred things: and if any public measure is proved mischievously to affect them, the objection ought to be fatal to that measure, even if no Charter at all could be set up against it. If these natural rights are further affirmed and declared by express Covenants, if they are clearly defined and secured against chicane, against power, and authority, by written instruments and positive engagements, they are in a still better condition: they partake not only of the sanctity of the object so secured, but also of the solemn public faith itself, which secures an object of such importance. Indeed, this formal recognition, by the sovereign power, of an original right in the subject, can never be subverted but by rooting up the radical principles of Government, and even of society itself. The Charters, which we call by distinction great, are public instruments of this nature.

Another feature of the President's scheme was that it contained provisions about the nature and functions of the machinery of Government. The Scheme also had a very clear provision relating to the power of altering the Constitution from time to time, to be held and exercised by the Indian Legislature.

The President then proceeded to mention the different ways in which constitutionally Responsible Government could be made an accomplished fact. The speech contained a powerful appeal to Montagu and the Government of England to establish, without further delay, Responsible Government in India. That appeal was of the usual nature with which readers have grown familiar by this time. So I am quoting from the speech only the important portion which dealt with Non-Co-operation. After citing the experience of Governments in India since the days of Ashok and in the British Commonwealth in its different parts, the President observed:

The Scheme of Responsible Government held out before the people in the Reforms Act, has been thought of and constructed on purpose to

conciliate the ancient Bureaucracy, most unwilling to abate a jot of their power and prestige, actual and imaginary. The whole involves a double peril, perpetual friction between the Bureaucracy and the people's representatives and inter-provincial jealousy and strife to be decidedly ripened into international jealousy and strife.

This being a grave political situation, the country and the Congress are agreed that the one remedy for its prompt liquidation is the immediate establishment of Responsible Government for British India, leaving it to its people and their representatives to revise and readjust the Provincial system of Government on sound lines tending to domestic harmony and peace. The one question, everywhere asked is: What is the sanction behind our demand?

In answer to this one vital question, the Special Congress at Calcutta recommended, by majority, a Programme of Non-Cooperation. As to the great necessity for the adoption by us of some such weapon as that of organized Non-Cooperation with the rulers in view to reach our full freedom immediately, there can be no two honest opinions. The means we used so long have proved unavailing... The exact nature and scope of the principle of Non-Cooperation has not been defined and it is difficult to define it. It is to be hoped that the principle is elastic enough to include passive resistance on concrete occasions and to specific measures, whether legislative or administrative, and also to include strikes, sectional, vocational and otherwise.

The President then proceeded to give his views on the several boycotts. The Council boycott, he approved. The boycott of schools and colleges, he disapproved, making the following observations on it:

You have had the experience of the movement relating to the withdrawal of students from Government and aided schools. Your experience is spread during the past few months. It is for you now to determine and to declare whether this part of the Programme should be affirmed and carried out... Is it possible that boycotting Government and aided institutions would anyway paralyse the Government in England in its administration and compel it to grant our object? If Government are relieved from maintaining schools and colleges, costing over 8 crores of rupees annually is this a national advantage? In order to replace such institutions by our own national institutions, should we not have funds which will give us a similar annual income for which a capital of about 200 crores of rupees would be necessary and there is the very large amount needed besides for buying lands, constructing buildings, and laboratories, and educational museums and furnishing them. Is it possible, I ask you, for the country to supply that money in the near future?... It is for you to say whether this

object, to be reached by an amount of money which we cannot dream of realizing in the near future, is anywise related to the initial and only immediate object of the movement, namely, redress of our grievances in less than a year.... We seek Swarajya, the bedrock of a healthy nation and a sound family. Will not this propaganda separate students from parents and grand-parents and from elder brothers and sisters, oftener than not? How long is this process to continue if England persists?

But there is another and more serious aspect of the problem of national reconstruction awaiting your consideration and that relates to the education of our masses in primary education. Such education is behind most civilized countries, taking the test of the percentage of the pupils receiving primary education to the whole population.

Vijayaraghavacharya then mentioned the percentage in several free countries and the annual income and expenditure on education in India and ended by saying:

We must gather our money from our own people. Let us not forget that an enormous proportion of our population are ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-sheltered. It is not human to call upon these people to subject themselves to any large sacrifice in kind. Nor can we find this money from the middle classes. In the order of importance, we must begin national primary education immediately, leaving aside, for the present, starting national high schools and colleges. From this one standpoint alone, it is for you to say whether this item of the Programme should not be given up, at least should not be suspended, till a more favourable economical opportunity presents itself. One essential condition of the success of democratic Responsible Government, as distinguished from Aristocratic, is an intelligent and vigilant universal public opinion and this is only possible in the highest perfection in countries with universal education. Besides, a true Democracy implies universal suffrage and universal suffrage, where no less than 6 per cent of the population receive any kind of instruction, is futile and may even at times be dangerous.

The President expressed similar disapproval of the boycott of Courts. He observed:

Here we must start by putting the test question: How such a withdrawal of our countrymen would in the least paralyse the Government and accelerate the attainment of our object?... Is it at all reasonable and practicable that thousands and thousands of young men, educated and equipped to become members of the Bar at an enormous sacrifice in all poor and middle class families, should be suddenly asked to cut short their career, the only career for which they are fit? The sudden

withdrawal of the pleaders wholesale, especially the younger ones, if practicable and actually effected, which is doubtful, would plunge their parents and families into immense misery. Are we satisfied that this course is necessary for securing freedom? Does history furnish us with any similar example? On the other hand, does it not furnish us lessons to the contrary? Besides, we find that throughout the world the two classes, politicians and lawyers, are often identical. The great French Revolution, the dawn of modern political liberty, owed its success no less to the lawyers than to her statesmen and soldiers. The former two were most identical. The majority of the great Constituent Assembly of the glorious French Revolution were lawyers. The great Burke was stunned when he knew this fact in his aversion of lawyers.

Here again it is for you to discuss and determine whether it is possible and desirable at the same time that the regular Courts established by law should be abolished and replaced entirely by Arbitration Courts. Private arbitration has some value in society. The more petty offences and plain cases of civil dispute between individuals and individuals are disposed of by private arbitration and reconciliation the better, the private citizens, however enlightened and experienced, would not be able to handle and investigate complex cases of law involving consideration of highly delicate questions...of domestic, foreign and international law. The handling of such questions requires skill and technical experience, arising from a special and painful study of the law and jurisprudence and from experience at the Bar presided over by skilled and learned judges.... The result [of abolition of courts] will be an immediate increase of offences and criminal cases and a gradual decay of the national instinct for freedom.... Let us not forget that freedom means the rule of law and is it conceivable that the reign and majesty of law can be secured and maintained without courts of law and without the profession of the law? Taking these two items together (namely, boycott of educational institutions and of courts), I shall be justified in asking you to consider whether any appreciable success of the movement, which I humbly deny, can ever be reached. Does it not mean an unintentional and even unconscious proposal to rebarbarize the people of India? You would all naturally ask me, what then should be our programme if this programme is not adopted by us. I will make an honest endeavour to give you an answer in word, it is "Nation-building". We must take up nation-building at once on a scale and in a manner able to make up for lost time.

The President then proceeded to state his ideas on nation-building. The way is threefold, he said, (1) The reconstruction of the Indian people on principles sanctioned by the law of God and of utility approved by the wisdom of man, in all

free countries, ancient and modern; (2) the reorganization of the economic industries of our country with provisions against foreign and English exploitation of our country and also for affecting the commercial interest of England in so far as it may be possible for India to do; and, (3) lastly, entering into a gradual alliance with the Labour Party in England.

There are two principles [he observed] necessarily implied in carrying out the programme and propaganda work we are now considering. It cannot be carried out without national regimentation, which implies an absolute and universal surrender of private judgment and a gradual emasculation and atrophy of our capacity for such private judgment. History, ancient and modern, proves these to be inconsistent with national freedom and national happiness and progress, if indeed they are not inconsistent with our continued existence.

He quoted the instance of ancient countries like Greece and Rome where such regimentation led to utter ruin and observed:

It will eventually create and manufacture a new Bureaucracy and a new variety of intellectual tyranny in place of the old one. This happened in Germany in recent times. It will lead to other very serious evils and we have had our experience of work during these four months of the Non-Cooperation Programme. I ask you to think and say like sworn Jurymen, whether propaganda work during this time has not roused dismay, grief and fierce passions and animosity all-round?... While we are grateful to God and proud of the new and growing union between Muslims and Non-Muslims of this country, is it not our duty to ensure that we do not create two new classes sharply divided on the doctrine of Non-Cooperation with fierce passions and animosity?... Historic events tell us that a movement of this kind is fraught with domestic danger... Domestic boycott and that of a very fierce kind is a necessary concomitant of the propaganda work, and I am quoting the instance of Ireland in the days of Parnell and other reformers.

Vijayaraghavacharya concluded his speech with the following peroration:

India reborn and united and speaking as one man with the new motto, not of liberty and equality only but also of fraternity, inscribed on her banner fluttering in every wind of Heaven, can tell England:

"We belong to the species 'homo'. We were the first and foremost of it and we mean to be one of the foremost, if not the foremost of

it again; no more pin your faith in the political gospel of the man on the spot. Do not be stupid any more now or it would be too late to remember that there are some men in India, with admiration and love to England, the greater Athens of the modern world, and not inferior to the romantic devotion of Lord Byron to Athens and the fact of the rapid success of the movement of Non-Cooperation and the universal desire for a sanction other than rebellion to secure our rights shows conclusively the firm loyalty of the people and that it would be unparalleled folly, an atrocious and suicidal folly, to attempt to keep us by coercion, under plausible and captivating camouflage, such as the goal of Responsible Government, representation and voice in the League of Nations and Empire's Conference. In one word 'Be a good boy and partner with us or get thee gone.' And this, too, without a Cromwell and without shedding a drop of blood."

These copious extracts from the speech delivered by the President, Vijayaraghavacharya, have been reproduced to correct the wrong impression, created by certain books recently published from the Congress point of view, that, at the date of the Nagpur Congress, Vijayaraghavacharya had been, like some other Congress leaders, completely converted to Gandhi's programme of Non-Cooperation. The critical behaviour of the President, both in the Subjects Committee and in the open Session of the Congress, was however full of pleasant wit and humour—which I found in my experience to be an uncommon feature among Congress leaders. Later, when my intimacy with him increased and he wrote to me frequently from Salem, the sparkling radiance of his wit and humour came into greater play. This will appear from some of his letters which will be published in the later chapters of this narrative. But I cannot resist the temptation of narrating here one instance. While, during the temporary absence of Moonje, I took his place by the side of the President to help him rapidly to get through the business, I found, on going through the several amendments tabled before the Subjects Committee, that they were mere repetitions of the same idea. So, I bundled them together and proposed to the President that only one of them should be allowed, the others being excluded as mere repetitions. On that, he drew himself up and with twinkling mirth in his humorous eyes, observed, with great dignity: "My dear young man, in your inexperience you do not appear to know what you ought to, that there is always a fight between vanity and vanity, so we must allow all these amendments,

lest we provoke a quarrel."

The first Resolution of the Congress related to Article 1 of the Constitution which was sought to be altered as follows:

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means.

The Resolution was moved by Gandhi in what he called "a few religious words". Gandhi's speech was short but direct. He observed:

There are only two kinds of objections, so far as I understand, that will be advanced from this platform. One is that we may not today think of dissolving the British connection. What I say is that it is derogatory to national dignity to think of a permanence of the British connection at any cost... I do not for one moment suggest that we want to end the British connection at all costs unconditionally. If the British connection is for the advancement of India, we do not want to destroy it, but if it is inconsistent with our national self-respect, then it is our bounden duty to destroy it. There is room in this Resolution for both, those who believe that by retaining the British connection we can purify ourselves and purify the British people and those who have no such belief.

You have resolved by this Resolution that, so far as you can see today, we cannot give battle to this Government by means of steel, but we can give battle by exercising what I have so often called "soul-force" and soul-force is not the prerogative of one man or a Sanyasi or even a so-called saint. Soul-force is the prerogative of every human being, male or female.

Lajpatrai caused considerable surprise by seconding this Resolution. People's minds turned to his speech clear and convincing, at the previous Session at Calcutta only a few months ago. His was the greatest capture Gandhi secured at Nagpur. Gandhi went on:

Now [since the Surat Congress of 1907] about thirteen years have rolled by and many events have since happened which practically make it compulsory, almost obligatory, to change the creed and I am prepared here to say that it could not be changed in a better way than is proposed. I say it is only a development of the policy which was adopted at the last Session at Calcutta in passing the Resolution of Non-Cooperation. What does this change of creed aim at? A notice to the British public and the British Government that although we do not at the present moment aim, directly aim, to get out of this British

Empire, if we remain in it we shall not remain at the dictation of anybody. We shall remain there by our own free choice and free will.

The phrase "Swarajya" has been deliberately used for the purpose of enabling us to remain within this Commonwealth if we choose, when that Commonwealth has been established or go out of it when we like.

The concluding part of Gandhi's speech was as follows:

I just want to tell you one word:

The paths may be long and tedious. The goal may be distant, though I hope it is not. The task may be difficult. But there is nothing impossible before a nation of 315 millions. If we decide to do our duty, to do our duty manfully, fearlessly, in a spirit of selfless devotion to the interest of the country, what we are aiming at we shall achieve at no distant time.

Jinnah opposed this Resolution in a forceful speech delivered in his usual manner. Towards the end of his speech, he summarized his thoughts as follows:

Therefore, my objection is this. To summarize it in a few words—first of all, I object to this creed because, as I read it, it means nothing else but a declaration of complete independence. The word "Swarajya" is not qualified and the word means nothing else but complete independence. You find qualifications only in the speeches on the Resolution but not in the Resolution itself. Therefore, that is my first objection. I say, if that is your intention, why don't you make it clear.

My second objection is that, Non-Co-operation by peaceful methods—legitimate but peaceful methods—may be an excellent weapon for the purpose of bringing pressure upon the Government, but let me tell you at once that the weapon will not succeed in destroying the British Empire. I, therefore, object to the methods, because if you want complete independence, let us not be limited by methods. Who is to decide, as we go on, what will be the effective methods to achieve the complete independence which you are asking for? I really feel that the Resolution is neither logical nor is it politically sound or wise, or practically capable of being put in execution. I have given you my opinion. Do not for one moment believe that mine is an advice of weakness. I was told in the Subjects Committee that these views arise from want of courage. If I wish to retort, I can say that yours is fool-hardiness, but those words do not help us in any way.

He concluded:

At the moment the destinies of the country are in the hands of two men and one of them is Gandhi. Therefore, standing on this platform, knowing as I do that he commands the majority in this assembly, I appeal to him to pause, to cry halt before it is too late.

This speech was met by several adverse cries, the most odious of which was that which called Jinnah "a political imposter".

Several other speakers spoke, including Colonel Wedgwood, M.P. He observed:

In the House of Commons I often ask the members of that House to try to put themselves in the position of Indians and to think what they would do if they were Indians and the Indians were Englishmen ruling over them. And now I ask you, what you would feel like, if you were in my shoes addressing a subject race who have suffered injury at the hands of my countrymen? What, for instance, would Mr. Shaukat Ali feel, if he was asked to face an audience of Armenians and Greeks? I think that he would feel very much as I feel—a sympathy, and yet a feeling that he had to stand up for his countrymen and for the Truth at the same time. Now, Lala Lajpatrai, for instance, charged all British statesmen with being breakers of words and faithless individuals, but let me tell you that that charge has been levied and will be levied and can be levied against all statesmen of all times. [A voice: "But not against Mahatma Gandhi."] Mahatma Gandhi is no statesman. He is a saint on this earth. I remember at one meeting saying a word in defence of Montagu—one of those accursed satanic Secretaries of State—the *Independent* of Allahabad accused me of being an Emissary of Mr. Montagu. The *Independent* must know aright, but I want you to note about Mr. Montagu that he has done more than any previous Secretary of State in history to earn his wages from the people who pay them and I ask you to note further that at a time when he was being damned daily by the *Morning Post* in London and the Anglo-Indian Press in Calcutta, at a time when he had lost the confidence of the Cabinet, when he was shouted down in the House of Commons as being a traitor to his country, at that particular moment Indians had better been quiet. Judge your men from their friends and not from their enemies and then exercise a little charity. I remember when I first met Lala Lajpatrai, he spoke to me, as he has spoken to you and to me ever since, of the wrongs committed by my countrymen against India, and I need hardly say to you that I am going to spend the rest of my time fighting those wrongs and put an end to them. But after he had detailed all their crimes, Lajpatrai turned to me and said, "Ah! Commander Wedgwood, but England is nothing compared to America, where there is no Press and no public

man who dares to stand up for an unpopular minority; there is no freedom because popular will dominates and no man speaks against popular will."

Wedgwood continued:

There is truth in that. That truth applies to India also. Be careful that in your Swarajya—the new creed—you have real Swarajya based upon self-control as well as upon Self-Government.... The one thing that has created the worst impression upon me—I am only an outsider, I know—was the treatment meted out to Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Malaviya and Sir Ashutosh Choudhary yesterday in the Subjects Committee. I want to tell you that you cannot expect to hear the truth from your leaders, ... unless you allow more fair play, more freedom of speech. It is a perfect scandal that an old lady of 80 years of age was shouted down at Bombay. Call her back again and allow freedom of speech not in the interest of Mrs. Besant or in the interest of Mr. Jinnah, but in the interest of India. Free speech is the only basis upon which Democracy can survive. I have seen the Irish struggle for Independence. Let me tell you that in Ireland the parties were divided far more bitterly than they are in this country.... But they always behaved towards each other like gentlemen and gave patient hearing. Save India from this awful position that your public men become afraid of public life and retire into private life.... The first thing in every political leader is not brains but courage. You are changing your creed—I deplore that change of creed, merely because it may make it more difficult for that union, which your President rightly asked for, between the Congress, the Nationalist Indians and the Labour Party at home, not impossible but more difficult. I do beg of you when you effect that change in the Constitution, you will at the same time see that Swarajya is a real Swarajya, a democratic Swarajya and not a Mobocracy—not the sort of rule that maintained itself in France 130 years ago—but real, live, passive movement such as your great leader desires and such as he has followed. Follow him not only in passive resistance, but in allowing every minority, however small, to secure justice and fairplay in the India of the future.

Several amendments were moved, e.g., to substitute for the word "Swarajya", "full Responsible Government". But these amendments were either not moved or lost.

On the third day, proceedings began with the President's speech welcoming Ben Spoor, Member of Parliament. Ben Spoor who received a very hearty ovation replied as follows:

I have heard some very severe things regarding the association of

27

Britain with India during these years. Unhappily, there is too wide a basis in historical facts for the accusations that have been made. At the same time, I feel bound to say that, so far as those of us who are *Delegates from Britain to this Congress* are concerned, we have met with nothing but the most extreme kindness. I come here, as the President indicated, to convey to this great Congress the good wishes and the good will of the British Labour Party. However hostile might be the British Government, the Labour Movement of Britain is wholeheartedly with you in your fight for your liberty and we have been committed to the principle of self-determination and its application to all parts of the world as long as we have been in existence.

Then Spoor read from the Resolution that was carried at the last Annual Conference of the Labour Party held in June of that year. After affirming belief in the principle of self-determination, the Resolution went on to say:

This Conference, therefore, demands the full and frank application of the principle of self-determination in the organization of the Government of India that is now in progress, in such a way as to justify all the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people. It asks that corresponding measures may be taken in Burma, Ceylon and other parts of the British Empire, in which Self-Government is demanded. It emphatically protests against the militarists and the repressive measures adopted by the present British Government and expresses its sympathy with the peoples now held in subjection. It denies the right of any Government to govern the people against the will of the majority.

The last clause of this Resolution was as follows:

While expressing the hope that all the people in the British Empire would prefer to remain as parts of the British Empire as soon as their aspirations have been dealt with in a thoroughly conciliatory manner by the granting of adequate measures of Autonomy, this Conference declares that the final decision must rest with those peoples themselves.

He went on to add:

I have not come here to tell you how you are to achieve your freedom. You have leaders who are fully competent to do that and who are highly qualified to lead you in the right path. My duty here really is that of an observer, a sympathetic one, and with my colleagues I will go back to England and try to report to the Labour Party what I can see, to be the opinion in this country, in this time of crisis. I do not anticipate that report, but I am compelled to say that the one

thing which we are bound to comment upon when we get back to Britain, is the most amazing unity, the most extraordinary spirit that we have seen manifested everywhere we had been. May I say also that to us one of the most hopeful features in the present situation in which India is, is that the rise of the Indian Labour Movement synchronizes with the extraordinary outburst of Indian nationalism. We want to secure co-operation between the Labour Movement in Britain and the people of India. We want to retain a real connection between democratic peoples everywhere.... We want co-operation for this purpose between the peoples of India and the peoples of Britain, because the West cannot do without the East. We believe that the people of India can make immense contributions to our well-being in England, not material contribution, but real contribution in freedom, political, economical and spiritual. I hope that the future will reveal a new slogan, a worthier one, a better one, not India for the Indians nor Britain for the British, but for the whole world, for free humanity.

Motilal Nehru thanked Ben Spoor. He said:

We take the words of hope which have been addressed to us by Mr Ben Spoor on behalf of the Labour Party in the spirit in which they have been offered.

After this Resolution which had been unanimously carried, Das rose to move the Resolution on Non-Co-operation, which was, after the Resolution relating to the creed, the most important one at this Session. It restated the contents of Non-Cooperation in clear-cut sections, in order that critical readers might be able to judge how far the details of the Resolution relating to Non-Co-operation received success, complete or partial, and how many of them failed in the years to come.

In moving that Resolution, Das said:

I ask you to consider this Resolution very carefully. I deny the charge that this Resolution is weaker than the Calcutta Resolution. I claim it is stronger, it is fuller, it is more complete. You must remember that directly the call made in this Resolution is sounded, that call has to be obeyed by all sections of the community, lawyers, students, tradesmen, merchants, agriculturists, everybody, and every section in the country must respond to that call. Every Indian is to take his hands off that machinery and compel this Government to do what you like.

Then Das referred to the several boycotts and expressed his dissatisfaction with the way they had been carried out since the days of the Calcutta Congress and recommended larger sacrifices.

May God grant us the strength not only to pass this Resolution but to work upon it and to carry out the great ideal of which the Resolution is the expression.

Gandhi seconded the Resolution in Hindi, Bipinchandra Pal supported it in English.

Lajpatrai then rose to support the Resolution, which many, especially in the Maharashtrian ranks, considered an unintelligible *volte face*. In securing his complete co-operation, Gandhi had effected a great triumph as also in the conversion of Das.

Lajpatrai's speech, in essence, was an apologia for his change and he explained that his previous objections to the old Resolution relating to the boycott had been practically removed in the new Resolution. He knew that many Maharashtrians were at heart against the resolution, but, swearing in the name of Tilak, he said that he was very glad that that name had been added in this resolution to give it a more effective support. The spirit of the late Bal Gangadhar Tilak, when he reads this resolution, will rejoice that the country has taken this step, he said.

Hakim Ajmal Khan and His Holiness the Shankaracharya of Sarada Peeth, supported the resolution. Hazrat Mohani suggested an amendment, which he ultimately withdrew.

Gandhi spoke in the end, replying to the amendments. With reference to objections raised on the ground of conscientious differences, Gandhi stated:

This is a misconception of the resolution. It does not bind a man's conscience and is never intended to supersede a man's conscience. I have never made a fetish of the mandate of the Congress and even now, although I feel that the majority are of the opinion that I hold, I make bold to say that I shall never be a party in making the Congress itself a fetish or its mandate a fetish. I shall always reserve the right of conscience wherever that conscience pricks me and tell me that it is against the mandate of the Congress.

Recalling the differences and acrimony and even violence in thought, deed and word, which had guided public life during the previous three months, Gandhi said:

You will eschew all such feelings in thought, deed and word, and I would repeat the promise that I made that we do not require one year, we do not require even nine months to obtain Swarajya.

Gandhi next announced that he had received a message from Malaviya that, on account of illness, he could not attend the Congress that morning. The Pandit, he stated, had been sent a copy of the Non-Co-operation Resolution, but he was not at all in favour of it and that if he had been present in the Congress, he could have voiced his respectful protest. He was not in sympathy with the creed either and thought it was his duty to transmit his message to his countrymen and leave them to judge.

The amendments were eventually either withdrawn or lost and after the President had summed up on the debate, he put the Resolution to the vote. The Resolution was carried. Motilal Nehru, who had come to occupy the Chairman's place for a short time, decided that votes would be taken Province by Province. The result was as follows: Sind, one against; the rest for. United Provinces, one against and the rest for. The other Provinces were all for the Resolution. It was thus a complete and singular triumph for Gandhi, with this added significance that it was won at Nagpur, the Province of Kharparde, Aney, Moonje and other Maharashtrian stalwarts. Most of them were present, but did not rise to oppose the Resolution. With their objections, Gandhi could not ask them to propose, second or support either the Resolution on the creed or that on Non-Co-operation. But it was open to them, like Jinnah and Malaviya, to express their opposition to the Resolution. Kelkar was present, but did not figure in the debate and ultimately spoke on a tame resolution relating to the Land Acquisition Act, which was rather significant on the occasion when the entire land of the Mahrattas was acquired by Gandhi for the practice of Non-Co-operation. It was a complete triumph for Gandhi and the Maharashtrian leaders had to digest the discomfiture as best as they could. The only remaining resolution of importance was on the changed Constitution, the changes being in keeping with the change of creed and the advent of Non-Co-operation. Gandhi moved this Resolution. There was no conflict on this resolution, which was accepted without demur.

That brought to an end the politically important part of the Nagpur Session, although there were several other resolutions which are not material in this context.

Thus the Nagpur Congress Session ended with the cry of Non-Co-operation triumphant in the air. Vallabhbhai Patel

then invited the Congress to meet at Ahmedabad the next year, as Ahmedabad was the place where the idea of obtaining freedom for the people of India within a year was born. The advent of Swarajya within one year was emphasized by nearly every speaker who spoke in support of the Non-Co-operation Resolution and the astonishing shortness of this promised period of success had a great deal to do with the acquiescence of many supporters. At the end of the Session the feeling was, as a Liberal critic stated in the Press, that my own head was against the Resolution of Non-Co-operation but my heart was with Gandhi, whom I had, by that time, come to esteem as a person of great sanilitiness.

At the Nagpur Congress I had not much time to discuss with Gandhi my doubts and difficulties about the possible success of the Non-Co-operation Programme, notably the boycott of schools, colleges and Councils. In these matters my difficulties were of the same nature as were voiced by Lajpatrai in his speech at Calcutta and by Vijayaraghavacharya at Nagpur. But, as mentioned above, the enthusiasm created by Gandhi's personality and by the inevitability of Non-Co-operation, rendered so by the obduracy of the British Government, overpowered even the Maharashtrian leaders, although the Resolution did not carry their willing assent. I met Gandhi twice at Nagpur but, as he was very busy, he asked me to visit his Sabarmati Ashram in January, when he could devote more time to a discussion of the difficulties I had in view. As stated above, "my heart went with Gandhi but not my head", and it is always a troublesome matter when one wishes conscientiously to follow a great leader like Gandhi if his doctrines do not secure willing assent. To seek more light I, therefore, decided, shortly after returning to Bombay, to visit his Ashram at Ahmedabad.

I had many reasons for this visit, apart from Gandhi's promise to discuss his Programme with me. I had heard a great deal about this Ashram and remember Rabindranath Tagore's criticism, mentioned in a previous chapter, that the preponderant white colour of the Ashram and its surroundings, the white caps, the whitewashed buildings, the white sands of the river Sabarmati and the white dresses of the inmates frightened Tagore, because he always associated the white colour with intolerance and fanaticism. I had heard similar views expressed by other friends, who had personally great

attachment to Gandhi and I, therefore, left Bombay on 14 January 1921. My Diary extracts relating to this visit will, I trust, prove interesting:

Thursday, 13 January (1921): Could not leave for the Ashram in the company of Vithalbhai Patel who had expressed a desire to travel with me. I believed that Patel had the same doubts and difficulties which I had and intended that during our journey to Ahmedabad we might have ample opportunity of exchanging ideas.

Saturday, 15 January: Reached Ahmedabad at 9-15 in the morning. Mahadeo Desai, Gandhi's Private Secretary met me at the station. Drove with him to the Ashram. On the way, met Gandhi addressing students in one of the school rooms. Had a short discussion with him on the programme of music which the Ashram had adopted as also on its general work. Reached Ashram—Large ground, partially sandy, dotted with small buildings. Things just getting into shape under brick and mortar. Put up in a set of rooms occupied by a young Professor, a relation of Shyamji Krishna Varma. Met other teachers—a group of young, intelligent, enthusiastic men. The project is a colossal experiment which promises success, since, so far as energy and sacrifice are concerned, it looked thoroughly Indian in spirit, more than some of the Poona colleges.

Sunday, 16 January: I am promised further talks with Gandhi. I had a long talk with him from 8 to 11 in which he explained many difficult points of his theory of Swarajya, especially the relation to it of hand-spinning. He said an agricultural country, to be self-dependent, must utilize its spare time by developing one home industry, peaceful and fit for cottages. 30 crores worth of yarn is obtained from outside. If this is supplied in India, then another 30 crores will be woven and thus 60 crores raiment will be provided. Our mills will take several years to produce this for want of labour. Gandhi's antipathy to machinery arises from two causes, its consequent industrialism and also the replacement by complex machinery of human labour whereby power and wealth are concentrated in a few hands.

Monday, 17 January: Talks continued. Gandhi admits the basis of extreme asceticism behind his movement and has a hope that even Muslims and Parsees will fall in, because their religion contains proper elements, though not so prominently insisted on as in Hinduism. His notion of *Varnashram Dharma* (Hindu scheme of castes) which he disclosed was only the doctrine of heredity, but he was against the illiberalism preventing the rise of individuals beyond the limits of their caste. His advocacy of the claims of the depressed classes was enough antidote against excesses of the *Varnashram*

view. He had gone into a vow of silence on Monday and his expressions were rich and pleasant and he asked me to scan, with critical eye, what he had written in the course of this day for his paper *Young India*. His earnestness and faith are clear, his reasoning so convincing that I am already a half-convert. The movement appeals to me, with all my differences, by its fervour, sacrifice and asceticism and my studies in Hinduism incline me, in spite of my difference on the political tenets of Gandhi, to accept his ascetic views of sacrifice though it does not appear to me to be practical enough for mass adoption. At 12, I saw the College in the company of Gidwani, the Principal. I had to address the boys and answer questions.

Tuesday, 18 January: Great heart-searching in the quiet of my room.

I am dining with the inmates on Tuesday, but the cheap arrangements without being uncomfortable and the idea of starting such schools in every village which will pay their cost by weaving for a portion of the time are very intriguing. I wonder if the Education Minister will take up the idea. Today, I had another long talk with Gandhi for two hours on the same topics as on the first occasion, at the end of which Bannerji came from Das with a message that about eight thousand students had come out, wanting Gandhi's presence there. My views were against the draining of colleges and they continued to be so, but, with all these differences, it appealed to me that I should make my contribution in my own way to the movement of nationalising education and my thoughts turned in the direction of the institutions in Bombay with which I was connected. If that succeeds I realised that I might have to stop practising at the High Court to be able to give all my time inducing certain friends to join me. In that atmosphere, its appeal might be irresistible. I am therefore trying to fight as best as I can to retain my freedom until I return to Bombay. In that atmosphere, it seemed so difficult to say 'no' to Gandhi. Left Ahmedabad the same night for Bombay.

Wednesday, 19 January: In the train, I spent a thoughtful night resolving in my mind how best I could make my contribution to the great movement which was on the threshold. I realized with all my differences that my contribution must be such as I could sustain for sufficiently long time. I hated that it should be spectacular and shortlived. I resolved in my mind the idea of starting later an Ashram of great purity, sacrifice and earnestness in the suburbs of Bombay and accordingly on Wednesday, the 19th January, I reached Bombay at 11 and immediately went to a friend who had in a suburb of Bombay a beautiful residence and gardens which appeared to me a fit place for training young men into the religious devotion and sacrifice, about which Gandhi spoke to me so earnestly. Went to Court feeling anxious to give up practice with

the view of devoting my entire time and energy to the work of the Ashram.

Friday, 21 January: Resolved to suspend practice at the High Court. Saw three friends among the Judges. They dissented from me and one or two of them completely disapproved of the step I proposed to take. Returned all my briefs in my chamber. The chamber clerk was bitterly crying with emotion. I soon began my attempt to establish a National College. I did not believe in draining existing Colleges unless we had something to offer the students in place of the old Colleges. I, therefore, met the students from the several Colleges.

Saturday, 22 January: Long conferences with students in my garden. Most of them were enthusiastic about joining the College I proposed to start. I am trying my best to preserve restraint and moderation.

Sunday, 23 January: Long conferences with students.

Monday, 24 January: Suspended practice at the High Court. Prominent Congressmen saw me with great enthusiasm, welcoming me into the movement of educational reform. Long talks with them about starting a College. I mentioned my strict conditions of work. They agreeable [though the subsequent Diary entries will show how they changed afterwards]. Feeling great responsibility of the step I have taken. Wrote about my suspension of practice to the Chief Justice who had evinced great interest in me. Feeling hopeful about constructive work. I was clear in my mind that asking students to vacate Colleges was not useful unless we gave them alternative instruction. I hope, I will succeed, but I am not quite certain of obtaining co-operation. I find my notions very different in many ways from Gandhi's followers in Bombay. I am willing to co-operate if basic educational conceptions are not dissimilar.

Immediately after I decided to suspend practice, I wrote to Gandhi a frank letter in which I placed before him my opinion that his programme of Non-Cooperation, especially relating to the Boycott of Schools, Colleges, Courts and Councils, would never succeed and would, on the contrary, cause immense dislocation and harm to the progress of the country.

I offered to Gandhi, as an alternative, my entire professional income from month to month to begin with for three years and characterised as vain his expectation that, if I suspended practice, a couple of prominent Gujarati Advocates, my colleagues at the Bombay Bar, whose names he had mentioned, would follow my example.

After pointing out several difficulties, I ended by saying

that notwithstanding my serious doubts and differences and, in response to my great admiration for him developed during the Punjab effort and as tribute to his greatness, I was willing to offer at his feet, to begin with, three years' suspension of my professional practice, using my whole time in endeavouring to create a well-equipped National College in Bombay, and that this would be my individual contribution, constructive in its nature as suited by temperament, as I did not believe in and totally disagreed with the provocative and destructive speeches which were then being delivered in Bombay, evening after evening, which, in my opinion, were causing immense harm, not only to Gandhi's programme of Non-Co-operation but also to the political progress of the country.

Gandhi did not accept my offer of my professional income but desired the suspension of my practice. My withdrawing from the Bar was not without a severe wrench. I had many loyal friends there and good acquaintances among the Judges and it is, I think, permissible to quote below two amongst many letters I received on the occasion. The letter of Jamshed Kanga, a reputed colleague for a long time, the esteemed Advocate General of the Bombay High Court, then promoted to the Bench, wrote as follows below. A reference to him has been made in the previous pages of this narrative as a person who still keeps untarnished the high tradition of the Bar. Kanga wrote:

I am sorry that a perfect gentleman and sound man like you has left the Bar for work which you consider to be of great importance for the well-being of the people of this country. By your suspending practice, the Bombay Bar has, for the time being, lost a sound lawyer and an advocate of notable qualities. I know you are always actuated by the purest motives. But I wish to see you again at the Bar. I hoped to see you as one of the Ministers. I pray to God that you, as one of the Co-operators, work for the country. You may not agree with me but my humble opinion is that by co-operating, you will be able to do very good work.

Later, Chief Justice MacLeod wrote on 31 October 1921.

I miss you greatly in the High Court and I can only wish for the sake of India that this year may witness a better understanding between all communities.

The following diary entries will reveal details of my effort to start a well-equipped college in Bombay.

Tuesday, 25 January: Conference with Bombay Congress leaders. Talk about proposed College which will be my constructive contribution to the effort. I have no faith in draining Colleges, but I am agreeable to spend my whole time away from the High Court to start a first class College in Bombay, if funds are adequate and Gandhi and Congress leaders promise such funds. With this desire I wired to two friends outside Bombay, one an American graduate and the other a professor teaching History at Patna, to take leave and join me in my efforts to start a well-equipped College. This is my way of Non-Cooperation. Met, in my garden at Thakurdwar, Arts and LL.B. students. Frank talk, free from emotion, of which they had an undue supply. Twelve volunteers agreed to help. I warned them to use restraint of language till success was attained.

I may mention here that Gandhi sent two prominent Congressmen with the message that he would give me, for one year's experiment, one lakh of rupees to conduct a well-equipped College in Bombay competing on fair terms with the existing Colleges, Elphinstone, Wilson and St. Xavier's. On calculation of the expenses, I found one lakh would be sufficient for making the experiment for one year and, with the help of my friends, I would be able to succeed. I made a list of nearly 40 Professors, Teachers and Lecturers whose consent I secured. The difficulty about accommodation, which my Congress friends were unable to solve, I was able to get over by obtaining for morning hours, the accommodation in my school of the Aryan Education Society. Thus all difficulties were removed and I was looking forward to a great experiment in Bombay of a well-equipped College, my contribution to Gandhi's effort.

Wednesday, 26 January: I am resisting, with strong will the attempts of Gandhites to draw me on the platform every evening to call out boys from Colleges. I do not approve of the fiery speeches, emotional, unpractical and provoking hatred. I have decided to take a firm stand, declining to join in these strong speeches. I saw the Chief Justice at his invitation. Had a frank talk with him. He is most apprehensive and thinks that my steps will not succeed. One of my friends, invited to Bombay, the Prof. of American University arrived. After talks, it appeared that he was not over-anxious to join me, being full of apprehensions about my success.

At this time Vithalbhai Patel was agitating against National Education by delivering speeches against it time after time. He forgot that such education was a part of Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Programme. His views were typical of his usual

attitude. I met him. His mind worked in a different way from mine. I wondered how with such differences in our ranks this experiment of National Education would succeed.

I quote below a letter which I had to address to the two dailies of Bombay in connection with Patel's speeches:

I have just read in the Press a report of Mr. Patel's speech at a students' meeting, held yesterday, in which he is reported to have stated to the students, *inter alia*, that they should stop receiving National Education, and for nine months they should close their books and join in obtaining Swaraj. If students were to join national schools, he did not believe they would get Swaraj even in twelve months. Personally he did not believe in National Education, etc., etc.

I am not sure if the above is a correct reproduction of what Mr. Patel actually said. But if it is so, then I have to say that it represents Mr. Patel's personal view, which I have no doubt Mr. Patel must have taken care to make clear. So far as I am aware, this view is not shared by many Nationalists, some of whom have been giving me their co-operation in framing a constructive programme of National Education, by starting, without delay, a well-equipped College in Bombay, where the students, who wish to continue their studies in national institutions, may have proper facilities given to them, in no way inferior to those provided in the existing Government or aided institutions. The work on which some of us are engaged at present in this constructive part of the programme, arising out of the principle of self-reliance, which is as important a feature of the present movement as the principle of protest.

I thought it necessary to clear the position, as inquiries had been made of me by some persons who wished to assist my scheme. I am anxious that Mr. Patel's view should not cause any misconception in the minds of those who might be inclined to help our educational effort on its merits.

Thursday, 27 January: Another friend, the Patna Professor, arrived in response to my call to take up the work of Professor of History. Gidwani had a conference. His notions crude, extremely unpractical for Bombay. Expressed my vital difference from him. Mentioned my notion about starting a College. He has taken time to consider and finally decide on Saturday next. Students in large number see me every day. Several parents have written asking me to take the education of their children in my hands. I am exercising my voice and influence towards restraint and moderation. Controversial talk with Patel about the desirability of National Education. His views are absolutely different from mine.

Friday, 28 January: Frequent talks about the proposed College with the Patna Professor who is staying with me. His views are sound, though perhaps a little too unjust to Gandhi and his ideas.

On Saturday, the 29th, Gidwani saw me. He conveyed a message purporting to come from Gandhi. He said: "If you want money from Gandhi, your proposed College must satisfy the following conditions:

- (1) The students must not use chairs and benches but must sit on gunny carpets.
- (2) They must devote two to three hours a day to Charkha spinning.
- (3) Every week-end, they must go to the villages and preach Non-Cooperation on the basis of two books,

(a) Mazzini's Life of Garibaldi; and

(b) Fenner Brockway's Work on Non-Cooperation."

I replied, "There are no villages round about Bombay, but only suburbs. Secondly, gunny carpets would not suit Bombay's atmosphere. But why be dogmatic about such a trifle. Remember that we are competing against well-equipped Colleges like Elphinstone, Wilson and St. Xavier's. Parsees, Muslims and other communities, not wedded to Gandhi's doctrine, will send their children. If my College is to succeed, its environments and conditions must be nearly the same as in other Bombay Colleges though the nature of the teaching might be different. Besides, why attach so much importance to seating arrangements? As for spinning the Charkha for two to three hours a day, it is impossible. In my time-table, I am giving you one hour a day which is sufficient. It is a College and not a Charkha School. You say, it is Gandhi's view, but I am doubtful about it from the talks I had with him. He had promised me a lakh of rupees for one year's effort. As for the boys going out on week-ends to preach Non-Cooperation, it will not be permitted by their parents. Why force raw children into this political work? They would be clapped in jail within a fortnight. Parents do not send their children to college for delivering political speeches leading to imprisonment. Why don't you do that work, you political leaders, instead of compelling inexperienced boys to do it?"

To this, Gidwani's reply was that his terms were definite and, if I was not prepared to accept them, the Congress would not give a farthing. I said: "Have you brought any written

message from Gandhi, for I am doubtful whether you truly represent Gandhi's final decision." Gidwani felt resentful and said that I must accept his statement as representing Gandhi's decision. Any reference to Gandhi himself would be useless.

After this, it was difficult to continue the effort and on Saturday, 29 January, a final break took place with Gidwani and the project of the proposed College came to an end, which was a great pity. There was an obvious somersault on the part of Gandhi, and other prominent Congressmen in Bombay. Their original views were completely altered. I saw difficulty in agreeing to their conditions, totally unsuitable to a College in Bombay intended to be a rival to well-equipped and flourishing institutions of long standing. I preferred to retain my independence rather than be tied to the apron strings of people who had no idea of the educational environments and requirements of a cosmopolitan city like Bombay. Coalition with such a group only meant a weakening and the ruin of my cause. Honestly, I was not able to see eye-to-eye with these people in regard to the students' problem and most of their then activities appeared to me to be misguided and destructive, with no constructive element in them. Their effort was being guided by hatred and aversion. Their speeches were most provocative against men with different political views. Theirs were just the reverse of Gandhi's methods. The campaign went on every evening. There was no desire or attempt to devise thoughtfully any system of national education for the benefit of the young. The difference of views increased, and it was as much as I could do to hold silence over their destructive methods and the ruin of my College plan. I could not go further.

Thus my project failed. The staff of teachers I had gathered was dispersed, the Professors I had invited to Bombay for help in my proposed College returned home cancelling their leave, the friendly warning and forebodings of my critics came true and the prophetic speeches of the Presidents of the Calcutta and Nagpur Congress sessions proved more Cassandra-like than they had appeared at the time of their delivery.

The scheme of National Education which I had prepared and was anxious to see started in response to the resolution passed at the Nagpur Congress contained the following elements:

(1) It was based on the actual needs of the entire Nation in all its stages and was to give an opportunity to every man, woman and child to develop personality to the utmost extent and to live a full life.

(2) Its objectives, methods and standards of performance were to have relation to the facts of the complete life of the people and to their economic, social and cultural needs, so that it touched the society in all its various sections and cross-sections.

(3) According to the notions of freedom set free by the resolution passed at Nagpur, and to a certain extent, at Calcutta, the education of the young was to be based on a new conception of citizenship. I felt that the proper basis of a sound system of education must be a new conception of citizenship suited to the stage at which the country had arrived, and this, in its turn, would require us to decide what kind of society we wished to have, what ideology to create, whether we should continue the prevalent acquisitive or competitive system, where one man's loss was another man's gain, or whether we should replace it by a co-operative one which secured the common good of the various classes. I felt that it would be a mistake to leave this in the hands of the politician; it was mainly the work of the educationists of the Nation and thinkers connected with our educational system. The danger of leaving it to the politician, I felt, was, from my experience, that he would create citizens in the sense of "good haters and lusty flag wavers."

(4) The idea was to develop, by training at schools and colleges, a new type of administrator fitted to work the increasing opportunities of freedom we would have in course of time. He must be an Indian who had made the fullest use of the opportunities which he had at school or college in the manner mentioned below and who had acquired characteristics which made him, by breadth of sympathies, a truly representative Indian—a man of calm judgment, infinite tolerance, inflexible impartiality, combining with these a gift of leadership, able to rise superior to excitement and to quiet it in others by his toleration and readiness to appreciate the opposite viewpoint.

(5) The system was, at every stage of school and college life, to inculcate the necessity of national unity and peace and to adopt practical methods to bring them about. This

would be the best aim and object of our system of education leading to the attainment of freedom at an early date. A few forces, I thought, had already been at work and it would be the business of educationists to handle them in a methodical and scientific manner.

For a few years before the Nagpur Congress I had been making this scheme the subject of my speeches whenever I got the opportunity, for instance, at three or four colleges in and outside Bombay where I had to address the students. Even after the failure of my project I continued to do so during the whole of that year, drawing attention to the urgent necessity of altering our education on the lines mentioned above. Those who were agitating about this time appeared to have given not much thought to the essential principles of National Education and were guided more by political and destructive motives than by a desire to devote the requisite thought to the evolution of a system suited to the requirements of the occasion.

The failure of my project did not damp my enthusiasm and I continued my efforts to popularise my ideas whenever I got an opportunity. Simultaneously, I started useful talks with prominent Congressmen in Bombay and outside, placing before them my notions. Of course, the stigma of failure attached to my brow; that was inevitable, but I was happy to find that except amongst circles immediately concerned with my failure, there were a large number of Congressmen who favoured my views. On 30 January my diary entry records, "Met at breakfast at my house several Congressmen [some of whom are alive today and so I avoid mentioning their names]. They showed great good-will and sympathy." On 31 January, my diary records: "I had a long conference with S. R. Bomanji for two hours in which I pleaded that he might, out of his immense wealth, donate something for the benefit of the school children."

On 1 February I addressed the boys of a well-known school in Bombay about National Education. I found them full of ardour and enthusiasm about Non-Cooperation. The word appealed to them in their unthinking enthusiasm. I asked them to restrain their feelings and to learn to appreciate the true spirit of National Education. In the meanwhile a kind of college was started by those who had ruined my scheme.

I visited it, and I found it most rudimentary. The staff was enthusiastic but was most obscure.

From February to October, speaking briefly, I delivered 14 addresses at different places in Bombay and outside, my main theme being National Education. I began on 21 February 1921, with a lecture on the occasion of the 6th Death Anniversary of Gokhale. The occasion afforded a common platform for the spokesmen of the two rival schools of thought to meet together and have a frank discourse upon Gokhale, what his attitude would have been if alive at that date. R. P. Paranjapye of Fergusson College presided. Jinnah spoke as the representative of the section opposed to Non-Cooperation. I, on the other hand, attempted to prove that Gokhale's attitude, if he were alive at that date, would not have been of unmixed condemnation of Non-Cooperation but of judicious admixture of approval and disapproval. I quoted from Gokhale's speeches and writings to support my view and added that, instead of withdrawing himself from non-cooperation, he would have put himself at the head of the forces, for instance of National Education, directing them into channels of constructive work; that, simultaneously, he would have disapproved of the destructive aspect of the movement, especially as it affected the student world. Paranjapye took a middle course and claimed that, in view of the affectionate and personal relationship between Gokhale and Gandhi, Gokhale would surely have got Gandhi to alter the movement in important particulars. After briefly describing the constructive mind of Gokhale, I observed that those who knew Gokhale's views were aware of his attitude towards young students, which always was determined by the desire to instil in their minds a due sense of proportion and of responsibility and a correct realisation of the true needs of the country. He had realised that this aspect of our educational activity would not prove an easy task and that, in the peculiar situation of India, it was beset with extraordinary difficulties arising partially from the well-known capacity for self-sacrifice which Indian students had always shown at the right time. Gokhale, therefore, would have laboured to control the exuberance of their emotion with a due sense of responsibility. In this connection I quoted from one of Gokhale's speeches addressing the students:

Among self-governing people, politics brings into play not only the sentiment of patriotism but also a sense of responsibility. And young men, who feel the sentiment but lack the sense of responsibility, naturally leave practical affairs to their elders who possess both. To the Indian student, on the other hand, Indian politics is only a struggle in which his countrymen are engaged on behalf of the Motherland with a body of foreign officials representing the rule of another Nation. There is no room here even for the elders for any feeling of responsibility in regard to the administration of the country and for our young men, who find no restraining considerations in their path, politics necessarily resolves itself into a matter of patriotic sentiment—an interest in politics is for the Indian student the same thing as interest in his country and, to such interest, all that is earnest, all that is self-respecting, all that is chivalrous, all that is patriotic is continually impelling him.

Gokhale ended by saying that the only means of controlling this restless patriotism was the development of a sense of responsibility which would steady students' judgements and, with this view, his utterances were always characterised by the desire to call the students' attention to the proper cultivation of political sense and the habit of careful and comprehensive thinking in regard to the political problems of the moment. Speaking frequently to students with his usual sense of proportion, he drew the line where it came to active participation in what is called political agitation. He warned the students that thoughtless participation in political agitation would lower the dignity and the responsible character of public life and its true effectiveness. He condemned the unhealthy excitement which often evoked in students a bitter partisan spirit which could not fail to interfere with their studies and prove injurious to their intellectual and moral growth.

On another occasion Gokhale spoke to the students as follows:

When one talks to young men of independence in a country like this, only two ideas are likely to present themselves clearly before their mind: one, how to get rid of the foreigner and the other, how soon to get rid of him. All else must appear to the students as comparatively of very minor importance. The risk, which earnest-minded young men must run from such ideas fermenting in their heads, would be obvious to everybody and the worst of it is that the more earnest the men, the greater is the risk to which they are exposed. We hear it asserted

by some advocates of independence that their plan is to use only peaceful means for the attainment of their end. They may intend to use only peaceful means, but the Government, which certainly does not want to see its rule overthrown, will not long permit them to retain their peaceful character.

This advice of Gokhale was extremely apposite at that time, having regard to the hopelessly provocative and destructive speeches which were being delivered evening after evening to excited audiences of students. I could do nothing to counteract them, except to set into motion opposite forces in my speeches from time to time.

My speeches on National Education, in course of time, attracted the attention of prominent Congressmen in the districts and several of them came to see me with a request to start or help schools at different centres to give National Education. Ahmednagar, among others, was most prominent in expressing such a desire as one or two institutions there, not exactly schools or colleges, had received an impetus at this time on National Education. I gave them such help and encouragement as I could, but, at the same time, I warned them against the danger of the agitation which was being conducted in Bombay.

On 2 April 1921 an important event took place—the advent of Lord Reading as the Viceroy of India, relieving Lord Chelmsford who had by that time reached the peak of his unpopularity. I have mentioned in a previous chapter the great restraint and moderation with which the Congress Punjab Committee dealt with the general wish in the country to have him arraigned and tried in England for his connection with the Punjab massacre. The way in which he had slipped out of India was a greater condemnation than any which the Congress Punjab Committee would have bestowed upon his departure.

My efforts to popularise National Education continued and on 18 June I visited Poona for that purpose to deliver a speech under the auspices of the Poona Free Libraries Conference. I took the opportunity to meet, at their invitation, the Poona Moderate leaders at their Club. They were all prominent men and I had warm discussions, as my diary says, “about the situation which ended very pleasantly.” I also used the occasion to visit a very esteemed and ancient institution called

the *Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal* and a more recent one, the *Maharashtra Mofat Vachanalaya* (Free Library). I found occasion to speak to the promoters of these two useful institutions about National Education. On my return to Bombay I met Gandhi on 1 and 3 July and found in the course of our talks that his ideas on National Education had remained unaltered; but perhaps he was unable to control the emotional exuberance of his followers in agitating against National Education. On 10 July I spoke on the spiritual and moral aspect of the Gandhi movement: I could then sift and analyse the good and evil parts of it. Bombay was pulsating at this time with great enthusiasm. This is evidenced by a singular instance that, on 12 July we stirred up the cultural circles of Bombay by a joint theatrical performance of a popular play called *Manapaman* by the two most popular Dramatic Companies of Balgandharva and Bhosale. The enthusiasm ran so high that we were able to sell tickets for Rs. 100 each. I presided on the occasion, in spite of serious illness in my family, and spoke to the public about the necessity of supporting the good aspect of the Non-Cooperation Movement. We collected what was a record figure viz., Rs. 16,000, as the proceeds of one night's benefit performance and handed over the amount to Jamnalal Bajaj who was the Treasurer of the Congress at that time. The performance was extraordinarily good. Both the dramatic celebrities did their best and the next day, meeting them privately at my residence, I conveyed to them in the fullest measure our appreciation of their work.

On 20 July I met Gandhi in Poona in connection with the Tilak Anniversary. We had talks as usual and on my return to Bombay on 22 July, I was laid up with fever, occasioning Gandhi's visit to my place, on which occasion I gave him a donation of Rs. 25,000 for popularising the use of Khaddar which was one of the programmes of his movement in which I had faith. I then wrote a letter representing my feeling of great suspicion about the way in which the personnel of the Committee dealing with the two funds—which, as said above, he had started—was made up and I warned him that, in the whole group, selected apparently from communal considerations, very good names of Bombay residents had been omitted and I uttered a warning, which ultimately came to be true, that under the management of such people the funds would reach a disaster.

Scarcely had a week passed after my gift of Rs. 25,000 when Motilal Nehru came to my residence one morning, stating that, if I had no objection, Gandhi would like to give my donation to relieve the financial difficulties of a newspaper called the *Independent* which Motilal had started for political propaganda in the United Provinces. I was surprised at this request, but, not knowing how deep the financial chasm of the *Independent* was, I replied that I had given the amount as a gift to Gandhi, expressing no doubt my preference. As it was a free gift, I left it to Gandhi to decide what use to make of that donation. I learnt later, much to my regret, that my entire donation was swallowed up in the hungry maws of that impecunious newspaper; the only compensation for this deprivation was that it secured me the gratitude of Motilal, which, in later years, developed into friendly esteem.

My activities in addressing public meetings on appropriate occasions continued unabated. On 8 August 1921, I spoke at a public meeting held in Bombay under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Students' Federation. It was a Memorial Meeting for Tilak which gave me an opportunity of mentioning to the student world the teachings of Tilak's life and the lesson it presented for the guidance of younger men. I said:

In the life of you all will come, sooner or later, a moment when you will stand at the parting of the ways with a stern sign-post in front of you, pointing to two ways on either side, the one leading to personal gain and ambition and the other to sacrifice and service. Unfortunately, in the history of our country, especially under British Rule, these two ways have lain more or less apart. Nay, if we can judge by modern events, the distance between them is getting more and more. Perhaps, in God's wisdom and mercy, in some future phase of our country's history, the bitter antagonism between them will disappear. But until that happens, you will have to be ready, when the moment comes in your life, as it is sure to do some time, to make the choice, with a firm decision which the occasion will require. In Tilak's life, such a moment came very early and if he had so willed it, he might have risen to the highest pinnacle of personal gain and ambition. Nothing was more tender in my experience of Tilak than when he described, in his characteristic way, the supreme moment when he was finally called upon to choose between suffering and pleasure and the ease and promptness with which he made the choice. If the life of this great patriot could furnish you, even in a rough and sketchy way, the principles which would help you to determine your choice when

the time came, we should not have met here in vain this evening.

I am purposely avoiding speaking to you today of the more controversial or sterner aspects of Tilak's life, because it may not be given to us all to experience these phases of the great man's life. We are not all privileged to write *Orion* or *The Arctic Home*; nor even to suffer imprisonment with a Prophet's warning, uttered in the agony of his incarceration; nor even to write, amidst the distractions of a prison house, an authoritative commentary on the *Bhagwatgita*. But we are all destined, at some critical moment of our life which often comes unawares, to be called upon to determine speedily, finally and irrevocably in which of the two divergent paths our footsteps will walk. Happy are those who can make the right decision when the time comes.

On 3 September 1921, I presided at a public meeting in Bombay on the Death Anniversary of Dadabhai Naoroji under the auspices of the Parsi Rajakeeya Sabha. This body which consisted mostly of the aristocratic members of the Parsi community, often provided a link between the teachings of Gandhi and the conservative opinion of that community. In this connection proved very useful the indefatigable Barjorji Framji Bharucha, still fortunately amongst us but almost forgotten in Congress circles. I remember many occasions when he sought to establish contact between the national thought of the country and the opinions of that community. On this occasion I spoke of the lessons to be derived from Dadabhai Naoroji's life. I first pointed out the great faith and confidence which Dadabhai, during his long stay in England, had at one time entertained about British Rule. His earlier career was very chequered, beginning as a school master he went on to become a social reformer, then a merchant, commercial agent, Administrator of an Indian State, and later a politician in London.

Through all these stages, however, his activities were characterised by an earnest endeavour to be useful to his people, even at the sacrifice of his private means. Two features distinguish his early career as a publicist, which have very great value during present times: (1) an infinite capacity for taking pains in ascertaining true facts for himself, and (2) an indomitable courage in stating his conclusions arising out of these facts after they had been patiently investigated by him. His incessant search for facts and figures is an aspect of political life which has, unfortunately, become rare in these times. In this connection I recall a significant letter he addressed in January 1881 to Sir Louis Malet, the Under Secretary of State for India, submitting a Memorandum

on some parts of the Report of the Indian Famine Commission of 1880. After stating some prominent grievances of India, arising out of British Rule, notably the costly European services imposed upon the country, Dadabhai ended in a paragraph which embodied his great faith at one time in the beneficence of British Rule. He said:

"I believe that the result of British Rule can be a blessing to India and a glory to England—a result worthy of the foremost and most humane Nation on the face of the earth. I desired that this should take place and I, therefore, placed my humble views before our Rulers without shrinking. It is no pleasure to me to dwell incessantly on the wretched, heart burning, blood boiling condition of India. None will rejoice more than myself if my views are proved to be mistaken. The sum total of all this is, that without any intention or wish, and with every desire for the good of India, England has in reality been the most disastrous and destructive foreign invader of India, and under present times unceasingly and every day increasingly continues to be so."

In this faith and confidence in British Rule, Dadabhai worked in England for the benefit of our country from year to year. He met later with many disappointments, and on one occasion was called "the black man" and heard the principles of British policy enunciated in the following words which have since become classical, viz., that "*India must be bled*, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested or is at least sufficient, not to those parts which are already feeble from the want of it." As a result of the experience he was ultimately driven to the conclusion that instead of asking, as he had been doing, for one instalment of reform after another, India should make a bold bid for complete self-Government at an early date, which he did in his famous address at the Calcutta National Congress of 1906. This change in his views was, however, noticeable to the better mind of England as a wellknown newspaper, the *Christian Democratic Weekly* put it, "A highly spirited but friendly resentment has given place in India to a calm deliberate rejection of the right of England to rule India, to a refusal to recognise any excuses for England's failure or to place any further confidence in England's professions of regret or her plans of reform."

Two days later, on 5 September, I was called upon to preside at a meeting held under the auspices of the Social Service League where "Pussyfoot Johnson" as he was called, the great prohibitionist of America, lectured to a large Indian audience. He was called Pussyfoot, because he detected prohibition crimes with the stealth with which a cat pounces on its prey. As my diary entry states, "His speech was vigorous and *practical*. He is a fine type of stout-hearted worker."

We were then on the eve of the ten-day Ganpati festival which under Tilak's inspiration and guidance had been converted in Maharashtra into a fortnight's intellectual and cultural session during which valuable lectures were delivered by public men on religious, philosophical, political and educational matters. During this period, on 7 September, I got an opportunity to address the Senate of the University of Bombay, advocating the introduction of the Regional Language for answering University examination questions. This question, which has now assumed mighty proportions, was a new one at that time. The Senate of the University had not till then been treated to any definite proposals; many important men in the Senate were against the loading of an additional language test upon the student world. The subject, therefore, wanted considerable ventilation and accordingly in my speech I pointed out the advantages of permitting students to answer question papers in the Regional Language. I must say that, though I was not a frequent visitor to the Senate and was comparatively a younger man, my speech was received with commendation even by the older leaders of the Senate.

On the very next day I addressed during the Ganpati festival a large gathering of intelligent Maharashtrians, residing at a popular centre of the Deccani community in Girgaum. There also I spoke on 'Education'. In the course of my speech I pointed out, as has been stated in the previous chapter, how the ancient system of education in India had been completely rooted out by the British Government, though parts of it had received recognition in England in the system of Primary Education as later established in England. The ideals of education altered after the advent of British Rule and the present deterioration was the result. The old system produced not only intelligent but spirited young men. They were told of the affairs of the country. I urged that it was necessary to restore that system of village education. I quoted in this connection a very intriguing instance which a friend, then recently returned from America, had mentioned to me. During his stay in America, he interviewed a very eminent public man and educationist of that country and asked him the blunt question: "Can you suggest any method by which we can bring up our youth to the requisite pitch of education?" The American educationist shrewdly remarked, "First go and get your

system of Government altered and then come to me. I can tell you then several methods of attaining the ideal of which you are speaking to me. Without a free Government such efforts cannot succeed."

I delivered the next day a lecture at an intellectual centre of the Brahmin community in Bombay called "The Brahman Sabha". The subject of my lecture was, "Some Aspects of the Present Situation relating to Conflict of Cultures." The lecture was partly in English and partly in Marathi. The audience was very large and highly intellectual.

At this time, the old Brahman Non-Brahman controversy was receiving a new orientation. Hitherto, it had been astutely used by the British officials for the purpose of condemning, as selfish, the political demands of the educated classes, who were mostly drawn from the Brahman and other higher castes. In course of time, however, the younger members in the Non-Brahman Party decided to change the outlook of the older leaders of the Party. Amongst such younger men was Walchand R. Kothari. He invited me to a Conference in the Deccan where he proposed to canvass this change of outlook. I am quoting below from my letter written on 18 September 1921, in reply to his invitation, indicating how this change of outlook would be received by enlightened public opinion in Bombay:

You have now boldly come forward determined to counteract the danger of your agitation being exploited by the British Officials to cause more divisions between Brahman and Non-Brahman. To men of my view the Non-Brahman community is entitled to a very high status among the Hindus, provided they do not cause further divisions in the ranks of the Hindu Community. I am, therefore, writing this letter to inquire whether that is your attitude on this question, viz. your fight against the British Officials on the one hand and privileged orthodoxy on the other. If so, I have no doubt that there is a great future before the Non-Brahman. If he believes in his struggle as an enlightened patriot refusing to allow himself to be made a tool by the British official in the game of perpetuating his rule, I would like to know whether I understand your attitude quite rightly.

To that Walchand Kothari replied on 19 September 1921:

Your reading of my attitude, in my humble opinion, is quite correct and I am doing what I can to counteract the mischievous elements in the

Non-Brahman movement. My attempt failed once, but I am reviving it again in face of the tremendous difficulties which confront me. I shall be glad if you can give me your support in my efforts to establish peace between the conflicting elements of the Hindu Community.

The Brahman Sabha, mentioned above, was, in those days, as even at present, noted for its intellectual and cultural activities endeavouring to bring together the members of the several communities in Bombay. Although a communal body, as its name indicates, it followed a programme of tolerant contact with the other communities. It has just completed 60 years of work, an eventful record of social reconciliation.

In the President's chair on this occasion was Mahamahopadhyaya P. V. Kane, who since rose to be the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay and to greater eminence as a finished scholar and a popular writer on legal, religious and cultural subjects. In my speech, I referred to the great commotion Gandhi had caused by his programme of Non-Co-operation and the revolutionary changes which had taken place in public sentiment during the previous nine months. He had established a conflict of cultures between the ancient indigenous one, and another assimilated during British Rule. The best thought of the country had, therefore, to be devoted to obtain a reconciliation between these two opposites.

The problem was urgent though beset with difficulties. Gandhi believed in the ancient order of four castes (*Chaturvarnya*) but he could not be ignorant of the fact that Indian civilization had swallowed up many cultures in the past. Its power of absorption was immense, as critics had said, like that of a Sarcophagus which gradually swallows up substances enclosed in it. It must, therefore, be our effort to revive this ancient conciliatory spirit of absorption so as to evolve a new type of culture inclusive of the Muslim and Christian. The revolutionary unrest which Gandhi's doctrines are creating is a temporary phenomenon and there is reason for the hope that, as in the past, we shall be able to restore a friendly equilibrium between the old and the new types and that this process will be helped by Gandhi's own tolerant views, e.g. about the presence of the British in this country. This was indicated by his recently expressed view that any Britisher who made himself an Indian in his outlook and sympathies had an honourable place in his scheme of Swaraj.

In reply to a question from the audience I specified in my speech the parts of the Non-Co-operation Movement with which I was in disagreement but added that, whatever the defects of the Movement might in our opinion be, it had succeeded, during nine months, in awakening public sentiments which few other methods had done during previous times. But to succeed in our efforts we must follow the spirit of the *Bhagwat Gita*, that whatever we offer to our people in the nature of service—a leaf, flower or fruit as in divine adoration, must be placed at the feet of the people. That was the substance of the service required at present.

On the next day, 11 September 1921 I presided at a lecture by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who had not till then reconciled herself to the cultural potentialities of the Non-Co-operation Movement. Her deep studies in Hinduism and its cultural aspects had made her aware of the danger of popularising a movement which she thought had potentialities which were, to Indian sentiment, anti-cultural. However, the pleasant way she placed her views before the audience, had a quieting effect upon the fervour of her youthful audience.

While these activities were going on in Bombay, Poona was getting ripe for a visit. So the day after Mrs. Naidu's speech I had a conference with Baptista, a devout follower of Tilak's views and consequently not easily reconciled to Gandhi's teachings. My Diary entry of 12 September reads:

Baptista holds nearly the same view as myself except that he is more bitter. He related his interview with the Governor. He regards himself, like Vithalbhai Patel, with perhaps more justification, an opponent of Gandhi. I find that the absence in their temperament of any traces of asceticism or spirituality constitutes the main stumbling block in their understanding Gandhi.

The next day's diary entry reads:

I had tea with Patel in his rooms at Girgaum. Discussion continued from yesterday. His notions looked, to me, very crude and unrefined and bordering almost on violence. He appears to have been considerably displeased with the enthusiastic exponents of Gandhi's views. I tried to save an extreme outburst on his part against Gandhi and warned that Government might take advantage of his opposition. I desire, if possible, at an early date to get together Patel, Baptista, Kelkar and Jinnah and possibly Malaviya to arrive at a *rapprochement* which might save the situation from being used by Government.

A week later, on 23 September 1921, I visited Poona, accepting the invitation of the Deccan College students and Principal to lecture on the educational aspects of Gandhi's movement. My Diary records:

Saw Principal Wilkinson. Courteous and anxious to be nice, though he probably anticipated that my views might be in disagreement with his. Rested in his bungalow. Lecture began at 3-30. Audience crowded and distinguished. Many rulers of Indian States like Sangli present. Principal Wilkinson gave the history of the College commencing from 1821 when it was established by a Parsi philanthropist, who had just then returned from England impressed with what he saw at Oxford and Cambridge. He desired to have a similar College in Bombay with the main object, as his offer to Government indicated, of fraternizing Englishmen and Indians, as far as it was possible under the circumstances in India.

I began my speech in English. Spoke of the liberal ideals of British Indian education which Macaulay had conceived, namely, to turn out a race of what he called "Interpreters" between the two cultures, the Government and the people. I also referred to the Despatch of Sir Charles Wood [ancestor of the present Lord Halifax] conceived in a similar liberal spirit. I observed that, whatever Macaulay's original liberal motives might have been in giving preference to modern European thought over ancient Indian teachings, it was a great pity that this liberal policy was misunderstood both by Indians and their Rulers and was later reversed under Lord Curzon, desiring to dominate the educational system to turn out useful tools in the perpetual maintenance of British rule.

I advocated a reconstruction of our ideals and methods of education and, in that connection, used words which made Principal Wilkinson jump in his chair. What put him out was my comment that, in Gandhi's scheme, there was plenty of scope for friendly Englishmen; but not for those who were not prepared to go along with us as comrades but continued to adhere to old bureaucratic ideas. The Principal lost his temper and replied in a resentful speech which everybody thought was silly and unbalanced. After my speech, one or two rulers of Indian States, at one time students of the Deccan College, came to see me. They looked frightened, as if I had dropped a bombshell. I parted in a manner which I could properly describe as discourteous, both on the part of the Principal and the Royal guests who were present on the occasion. I left without further participation in the festival which continued on its lighter side.

On the next day, 24 September, my Diary records:

I had breakfast with Kelkar. A very simple meal. Long talk with him about differences with Gandhi of Poona political thought. I urged the urgent necessity of preventing an open breach between the two.

In the evening I lectured at the popular Kirloskar Theatre, under Kelkar's Chairmanship, on "Present-day Conditions". My speech caused a great commotion in the placid atmosphere of Poona and, on the next two days, the prominent papers of Poona, the *Kesari*, the *Dnyanaprakash* and even the distant *Bombay Chronicle* expressed views controverting some of my theories, especially those which sought to bring about a reconciliation between Poona political thought and Gandhi's teachings. At this lecture, I stated frankly my views both on what I agreed with and disagreed with in Gandhi's programme. I placed in the forefront of my argument the philosophic basis of the Non-Co-operation Movement.

The audience was large and attentive, admission was by tickets. I spoke for one hour and twenty minutes.

The *Kesari* wrote editorially on the 27th that I had traced, in a very attractive manner, the origin and development of the Gandhi Movement, and that I had expressed the view that Gandhi had harnessed popular resentment and made it useful, which otherwise might have run into destructive and revolutionary channels and that such a movement deserved the support of the leaders at Poona, brought up in the teachings of Tilak. "Poona had a great history behind her," I had concluded, "and it would be a great advantage if all this inherited experience, notwithstanding a few differences, might be turned into the channels of utility which Gandhi had contrived to create out of popular resentment engendered by the Punjab disorders."

The comment of the Poona daily, *Dnyanaprakash*, was of a different nature. That newspaper was at that time the foremost exponent of the views of the "Liberal" party in Poona. It had a wide news-service and was temperate and effective in its criticism of Gandhi's doctrines. It noted my disapproval of the boycott of schools, colleges and Councils but criticised very severely my statement that Gandhi had done a service to the country in harnessing into useful channels the general resentment caused by the Punjab massacres. It preached me a sermon that it was a mistake to be a victim of one's resentment on national questions and advised me to take to the path

of co-operation in Councils where the paper thought my abilities might be most useful to the country. Most of the article was devoted to the consideration of what it thought was the special temperament of Maharashtra. Maharashtra does not believe, it said, in perpetually keeping up national resentment but will find remedies to get out of it, especially if such resentment causes an unhappy withdrawal from useful work. The Gandhi movement, it thought, created an aversion to Western culture, which it was necessary for India to digest as India had done with so many other cultures in the past. This was the main theme of criticism of that paper in two well-written articles published on 27 and 28 September. Its criticism about me and the Gandhi programme, though severe, was not bad tempered.

Within two days' time, the Bombay daily, the *Bombay Chronicle*, came out with a similar criticism of my speech. The *Chronicle* was then regarded as a whole-hearted supporter of the Gandhi programme. Non-Co-operation might be an ugly name, it said, but Gandhi had selected it in spite of its destructive connotation as calculated to express briefly and effectively the sentiments of the people. It commented on my view that the Mahrattas were an active people, temperamentally incapable of long continued sullen inactivity. They would, therefore, like to take up the constructive part of the Gandhi movement. The *Chronicle* noted my disapproval of the boycott of colleges, Courts and Councils, and the burning of foreign cloth, but agreed with me that such acts were sensational and theatrical demonstrations. In substance, the *Chronicle* approved of my comments on the evil results of Council boycott leading as it did to undesirable compromises of important principles affecting the future growth of the country.

On my return to Bombay, I presided, on 1 October, at another meeting of the Parsi Rajakeeya Sabha to celebrate Gandhi Jayanti Day. I explained to the Parsi community the genesis of the non-co-operation movement and tried to rest it on a rational foundation. Gandhi, I said, wisely conceived the idea of harnessing the torrent of resentment in the country for service and sacrifice, fixing the impulse generated by it as a permanent influence in our national life. He directed the country's resentment against the *system* of Government not against the *race* or *individuals* of the govern-

ing class. Gandhi has rendered a great national service in leading the country to the realization that the present demands of public life are extremely inexorable and are associated with suffering and sacrifice. His great achievement is that he has taken advantage of the temporary exaltation of the national temper to weave this principle of suffering, purity and austerity into the public life of this country, ordinarily so materialistic.

I made a reference to an old episode recorded in our classics of a proud little child, insulted and drawn down from its cherished place of dignity and affection. He brooded over his insult, seeking to find a place where such wrongs would be impossible. After many years of trials and suffering, the child was asked by the Power which could grant him his cherished desire the following questions:

"Will you be a King?" "No," replied the child, frail unto death, "kings are liable to be displaced." "Will you be a wise man?" "No," said the child, "wise men's counsels wane in their potency." "Will you be an administrator?" "No," said the child, "they very often are guilty of expediency and injustice." "What will you then be? Will you be a star or a planet, irremovable for all time?" "No," said the child, "planets change their places at short or long intervals." "What will you then be? Where will you get the eternal rest which you are aspiring for, unchangeable for all time?" The child replied with firmness, "May I be the Pole Star, whom nobody can displace from its unalterable pedestal from age to age?" God in His mercy granted the boon to the child, wondering at his wisdom. India wishes, I said, to be on such a firm pedestal, from which no tyranny, no malice can draw it down, a pedestal of freedom to which by its culture and sacrifice it has entitled itself.

While my activities in Bombay for popularising National Education were going on, events outside were moving rapidly. The All-India Khilafat Conference of 1921 took place at Karachi on 8 July 1921, at which Mahomed Ali, the President, made a bold speech, which has since come to be known as the Karachi speech. The proceedings of the Conference came later to be the subject matter of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and many other political leaders. Mahomed Ali's speech on the occasion was repeated from thousands of platforms in India in accordance with instructions from the

Congress High Command as a challenge to Government. The Congress Working Committee met in Bombay early in October and issued a statement, in the course of which it said,

that it is contrary to National dignity and National interest for any Indian to engage or remain in the service of a Government in any capacity whatever, a Government that has used the Soldiers and the Police for repressing the just aspirations of the people, as during the Rowlatt Act agitation, and has utilized the soldiers for the purpose of crushing the National spirit of the Egyptians, the Turks, the Arabs and other nations.

On 15 September the Government of Bombay issued a Press Note as follows:

With the full concurrence of the Government of India, the Governor of Bombay in Council has decided to prosecute Messrs. Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali of Rampur and others for offences under Sections 120-B, 131 and 505 of the Indian Penal Code, in respect of their support of a resolution passed at the All-India Khilafat Conference held in Karachi from the 8th to the 10th of July 1921 inclusive, which, *inter alia*, declared it unlawful, at this time, for a Musalman to remain in the British Army or induce others to join the Army and declared it the duty of every Musalman to bring this home to the Musalmans in the Army. Government are confident that all loyal citizens will unite in condemning and combating the attempts upon the allegiance of the Army, on which, as recent events have shown, the peace and security of India, in so large a measure, depend and in repudiating the unwarranted reflection on its honour and devotion to duty which such attempts necessarily imply.

The Ali Brothers were accordingly taken into custody. There was considerable commotion in Bombay as a result of these arrests and, consequently, the Honorary Secretary of the Central Khilafat Committee had to appeal to the public to be calm and dignified and not to make any scene or Hartal. It was stated that this was also the wish of Shaukat Ali. Gandhi was at this time at Trichanapalli and he publicly repeated the speech himself and felt so strongly on the matter as to call upon the Nation to repeat the resolution on the subject. On 24 September, Gandhi issued an appeal to the Muslims as follows:

We must remain non-violent but we must not be passive. We must

repeat the formula of the Ali Brothers regarding the duty of soldiers and invite imprisonment. We need not think that the struggle cannot go on without even the best of us. If it cannot, we are neither fit for Swaraj nor for redressing the Khilafat or the Punjab wrong.

On 3 October I received a letter from Gandhi asking me to attend the meeting he proposed to hold in Bombay on the next day. That was with reference to the issuing of a Manifesto as a challenge to the Government. With reference to this Manifesto, my diary entry relating to 4 October reads as follows:

Conference of Congress leaders under Gandhi's presidency at Talyar-khan's bungalow at Chowpatty from 3 to 8. Manifesto resolved upon and signed. I personally thought it would be infructuous both constitutionally and as a political step. Vithalbhai Patel, Kelkar and myself fought on the constitutional aspect of the proposed Manifesto but our opposition was unavailing. Gandhi personally was very modest and submissive but his followers most intolerant and impatient. Patel protested for long but ultimately he, Kelkar and myself, who had raised the question, agreed to sign for fear of causing a split and consequent weakness.

The Manifesto which was issued appeared in the Press on 5 October. It was as follows:

In view of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and others for the reasons stated in the Government of Bombay Communique, dated the 15th September 1921, we, the undersigned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of every one to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of, the Government whether in the Civil or the Military Department.

Then we repeated word for word the statement of the Congress Working Committee, reproduced above, and added:

We are also of opinion that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and Civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other means of livelihood.

Bombay 4th October 1921
6-30 p.m.

This Manifesto was later ratified by the All-India Congress

Committee in Delhi on 4 November 1921. Scarcely had I returned home from the meeting at about 9 p.m. when I received a phone call from Setalvad, then a member of the Bombay Government, at Poona. He doubted my wisdom in signing this Manifesto. To quote his words then recorded in my diary:

Do you think that I will allow the Government of Bombay to walk into the trap you have laid for it by courting imprisonment by signing the Manifesto today? Nothing will happen. None of you will be arrested. You forget that I am a member of this Government and it will be my duty to prevent it from getting into your trap. It was a very foolish step but note, no prosecution will ensue and no commotion will be created, so far as this Government can help.

This phone message indicated exactly what Patel, Kelkar and I had been impressing upon Gandhi and his supporters. Government appeared to know full well that many of us had signed this Manifesto out of a loyal regard for Gandhi, knowing full well that it would be an infructuous document. About fifty leaders had signed the Manifesto, including the following persons:

Gandhi, Abul Kalam Azad, Ajmalkhan, Lajpatrai, Motilal Nehru, Mrs. Naidu, Abbas Tyabji, N. C. Kelkar, V. J. Patel, M. R. Jayakar, Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gangadharrao Deshpande, Umar Sobhani, Jammalal Bajaj, M. S. Aney, Dr. Ansari, Kaliquzzaman (now in Pakistan, a prominent supporter of the division of the country), Abdul Bari, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, Hazrat Mohani, Yakub Hasan, Dr. Moonje, Jayaramdas Daulatram, D. V. Gokhale, Barjorji Framji Bharucha, and M. H. Kidwai.

This step, however, brought us all great popularity and my diary entry of 5 October states:

Many friends called to congratulate me on my courage in signing this Manifesto expecting that I was sure to be arrested in a couple of days.

I did not disclose the talk I had with Setalwad on the phone and wondered at the naivety of my friends. Some voted me a Dinner at one or two Restaurants in Bombay.

It must not be imagined however that this step was approved by many important elements in the public life of India. For instance, Rabindranath Tagore raised a violent protest against it in a letter couched in language more than usually pertinent and effective. He saw in this campaign the danger of mental despotism. Gandhi had met him in Calcutta in September but the two had parted agreeing to differ. Tagore had decided to oppose this step and in a manifesto, "A Call of Truth", which he published in the *Modern Review* of October 1921, made the following criticism:

An outside influence seemed to be bearing down on the people, grinding them and making one and all speak in the same tone, follow the same groove. Everywhere I was told that culture and reasoning should abdicate, blind obedience only reign. So simple it is to crush, in the name of some outward liberty, the real freedom of the soul. A cause as great as India's should not be dependent on the will of a single master. The paths are intricate and hard to explore. Emotion and enthusiasm are required but also science and meditation. All the moral forces of the Nation must be called upon. Economists must find practical solutions, educationists must teach, statesmen ponder, and workers work. No pressure, either open or hidden, must weigh on the intelligence.

This evoked a strong reply from Gandhi, containing a tinge of sarcasm not usual with him. On 13 October he published a rejoinder in *Young India*. He began by thanking the poet as "The Great Sentinel" "for having warned India about the pitfalls ahead." I am quoting a few extracts from the text of an exquisitely worded letter indicating that the Poet's warning had touched Gandhi to the quick.

The bard of Shantiniketan has contributed to the *Modern Review* a brilliant essay on the present movement....

The Poet's essay serves as a warning to us all who in our impatience are betrayed into intolerance or violence against those who differ from us. I regard the poet as a sentinel, warning us against the approach of the enemies called bigotry, lethargy, intolerance, ignorance, inertia and the other members of that brood.

Whilst I agree with all that the poet has said as to the necessity of watchfulness lest we cease to think, I must not be understood to endorse the proposition that there is any such blind obedience on a large scale in the country today. I have again and again appealed to reason.

In this strain Gandhi continued and ended with a conspicuously sarcastic thrust at the poet:

True to his poetical instinct, the poet lives for the morrow and would have us do likewise. He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings, in whose veins new blood had flown during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching the birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions, it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe the suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—the invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it themselves. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow.

As some of us had anticipated, no wholesale prosecution followed as a result of this Manifesto. Its only result was that the signatories enjoyed ephemeral popularity for their courage. In my own case, I resumed my usual activities of lecturing in a couple of days' time. On 8-9 October I presided respectively at two lectures, one relating to the "Spread of the Marathi Language" delivered by an eminent scholar, now Mahamahopadhyaya, Potdar, and on the next day I spoke to young students about the necessity of cultivating a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit. In the course of my speech I mentioned a few methods of making the study of that classical language easy and interesting.

On 10 October I paid a visit to Ahmednagar to lecture on 'National Education'. My diary entries continue as below from 10 to 12 October:

Two public workers accompanied me, Deole and Devachake; reached Ahmednagar at 12-30 noon. Lots of people at the station to meet me. Weather pleasant. Motored to *Anāth Vidyālaya* of Devachake outside town. Arrangements were fair.

On 11 October the diary reads:

Formal opening at Ahmednagar at 9. A veteran leader Bhausahab Chowkar, respected throughout Maharashtra, presided. I spoke in Marathi on "Ideals of Education". Deole followed. Then a formal opening of the school followed and I laid the foundation-stone of its industrial branch. At 4 o'clock, visited the Weaving Branch of Lokamanya Library. Then tea with public workers. Then again a public

lecture on "Education" before a mixed audience. Dinner with public workers at Jape's house. Left Ahmednagar at midnight. Missed the connection at Dhond and therefore had recourse to a 3rd class Parcel Tram to reach home in time.

12 October: Reached Poona at 9.

The diary entry continued:

Altogether my visit to Ahmednagar was most useful and enjoyable. Ahmednagar was alive with new life. Met some very good public workers: Deo, Borkar, Saptarshi and Devachake. The city showed an extraordinary feature that workers of different parties joined harmoniously to promote the public cause. Bhausaheb Chowkar was regarded as a most reliable leader of the city. He was at one time a prosperous pleader but later renounced his practice and is now devoting himself to promote Gandhi's movement. The town was cleaner than expected and had the advantage of excellent climate. My stay was enjoyable and much appreciated.

I had been a Nominated Fellow of the Bombay University for a long time. Whenever I had time, I attended the Senate meetings and participated in the Debate; but I gradually discovered that as a Fellow owing his senatorship to the Government, against whose rule I was agitating, it became very embarrassing to me. So I ultimately decided to get out of such a position and wrote the following letter to the Education Secretary of the Government. It was dated 6 October 1957.

I beg to resign my office as a Nominated Fellow of the Bombay University. May I request you kindly to convey to His Excellency the Governor my profound appreciation of the circumstance that I have enjoyed the privileges of this office for more than ten years and also my deep regret that, under the rapidly changing political conditions of the country, I cannot continue to hold the office any longer, consistently with the political obligations I have incurred in this connection?

After four days in Bombay which I spent in talks with public workers, I thought of making a tour of the Thana District. Gandhi had been constantly asking me to put myself in touch with the common man in the districts, both for its own sake and also to enable me to note what progress his programme had made amongst the common people in the villages. I had long intended to do so but had to postpone the tour because of more pressing engagements outside. A Bom-

bay friend provided pleasant and helpful company during this tour and a stalwart leader of Bassein, unfortunately not amongst us now, accompanied us. The entry in my diary of 23 October, describing the commencement of the tour, is as follows:

Got down at Asangaon on the Igatpuri line. Drove from there to Shahapur. Stopped at Sonyabapu Godbole's house. Had a meal there. Met Govindrao Vartak [since then a prominent Congressman and, for some time, a Minister of the Government of Bombay]. Left in a rapid motor car drive at 2-30. Reached Kasara at 4. Addressed there a meeting, largely attended by Muslims and Hindu peasants. Rain came down in torrents but meeting kept going. Left, two hours through the beautiful Thal Ghat, making our way through the ravages of the storm. Reached the village Khodale at 8-30 p.m. Stopped in a Dharmashala. Ate a spare meal supplied by the peasants. Slept overnight. The company though rustic was extremely pleasant, the talk instructive. Kunte Vakil of Bhiwandi joined us. The Ghat was picturesque and quite up to its reputation. The talks continued late into the night. I could discover that the awakening amongst the people was wonderful.

Diary entry on 24 October:

Left Khodale after tea. Reached Mokhada at 9. Addressed a meeting of villagers, simple-minded and enthusiastic. They were very alert and expectant. The Police party present, to report my speech. I spoke on Gandhi's message and its significance concerning peasants and villagers. A local Gujarati Doctor treated us to a meal. Left Mokhada at 1-30 noon. Reached Khodale at 3; addressed crowded meeting of villagers. Police party again present but attentive and friendly. This time, I spoke about our duties relating to Swadeshi and temperance. Had a cheery sendoff, with village music [band] in attendance. Police Inspector kept company; was polite and deferential. Left for Wada at 4-30. Again travelled through the picturesque Ghat. Reached Wada at 6-30, and, in spite of the late hour, addressed a public meeting of Hindus and Muslims. The meeting was crowded but very good tempered. Stopped at P.W.D. Bungalow.

Left Wada after tea, which a hospitable medical man provided. Had *pansupari* with inhabitants. Reached Manor at 9. Organized meeting of Muslims with a sprinkling of Hindus. Addressed them on Gandhi's programme. Then left for Palghar on the B.B. & C.I. line [as it then was called, now Western Railway]. Reached at 12 noon. Stopped with an enthusiastic worker [still living amongst us], Chhotalal Shroff, a very quiet and dignified worker. Addressed a public meeting of inhabitants at 3-4 p.m. at the house of Dandekar, the local leader. Then too-

train at Boisar. Travelled through pretty villages. Reached Chinchani; where a large and enthusiastic meeting of villagers was held in pretty rustic surroundings on the seaside. My speech was on the same lines as before, except that I asked for greater reliance on local leaders. We then left for the seaside village, Dahanu, in a Tonga. Crossed the creek in the company of Dahanu's leading men. At Dahanu addressed a very large public meeting. I tuned the speech to the requirements of the local workers. Then drove to a friend's hospitable residence on the seashore. Spent the night there. Dahanu is a very pretty place and the sandy beach extends over several miles. Left by train for Umbargaon. There met leading men some of whom have since become noted public workers, Deodhekar, Karulkar, Sanjanwala. Then drove to put up in a big house with other guests. Conference began at 2-30. Reception Committee's Chairman Karulkar's speech was very good. He avoided all controversy and dealt with local topics. My Bombay friend followed with a clearer survey of recent events, offering suggestions and comments on the entire political situation. His speech was appreciated. A representative of the *Bombay Chronicle* was present at the meeting and on the 28th October a report appeared in that paper in Bombay. It referred to a rumour then current and spread by Gandhi's opponents that, feeling diffident about the attainment of Swaraj within the time limit of one year, Gandhi had expressed a desire to commit suicide. "Why should I?" he asked, when the news was reported to him. "If India needs it," he added, "she will get Swaraj. India knows its price. She had also tested it. If India wants it she will pay the price and get it. Whether she gets it or not, what has Swaraj got to do with my suicide." "It is true," the article said, that "Gandhi has discussed the following with his friends:

I [Gandhi] was asked what I would do if I failed to get Swaraj in January next. I replied that I have such great faith in India that I shall until the 31st of December continue to believe that India is sure to attain Swaraj. That is why I cannot say what I will do in January. If the people will allow me I shall either retire to a quiet place or I would like to help them so far as I can, in framing the Constitution of Swaraj. If, after all, we failed in obtaining Swaraj this year, I would not like to live next year. It would so torture my soul that my body would possibly collapse—I wish it would so collapse."

Diary entry, 25 October:

A Muslim leader Idrus of Surat spoke. Rambling semi-religious speech. Gupte of Bassein spoke about Mulshi Peta agitation. He was forcible but unconvincing. We finished the work at 8-30 p.m. Then the Subjects Committee met. Had warm discussion about resolution

asking Congress to reverse the programme of non-co-operation. A Gujarati leader Dayalji took up cudgels for Gandhi and propounded extreme views. My Bombay friend and myself put up the other side. Deodhekar supported us and a few Maharashtrian Vakils. Ultimately we succeeded in having the draft resolution passed. The Conference met again next morning, at 8. I moved the controversial resolution in a speech in Marathi, trying to allay the feelings of the opposite side and explaining the rational basis of the resolution which was ultimately passed unanimously. Even Dayalji spoke against the boycott of Councils, deriving his experiences from local events. In the end, he supported the resolution in spite of his early speech. The Conference ended in great enthusiasm and after partaking of a meal with the public workers we left for Bombay by the midday train reaching Bombay at 3-30.

Divali was just beginning in Bombay. Altogether, the tour had effected the purpose I had in view and did a lot of good to me; brought me, as Gandhi had desired, face to face with the poor *rayat* and my impressions about their hopeless poverty were deeply confirmed. I could never be too grateful for the opportunities our friends gave us from time to time to study the local situation. The awakening I saw was a convincing indication, which I later reported to Gandhi, of the success of his agitation and I thereby gathered strength and felt encouraged to carry on propaganda in other villages on the several parts of Gandhi's programme with which I was in complete agreement.

Within a week of my return to Bombay I was asked by Bhabha, father of the present eminent scientist, and another representative of the Tata Company, to intercede in the dispute which was then raging between that Company and the peasants of Mulshi Peta in the Poona district. This was at a stage when the two sides had partially tried their strength and the Tata Company, with the help of the Government and in possession of their immense resources, had tilted the scales slightly in their favour. I mentioned the conditions which alone would induce me to intercede, but they were not acceptable either to the Tatas or the Mulshi peasants and consequently my intercession, at this stage, did not prove successful, although it enabled me to visit the Peta and ascertain the relative merits of the dispute. The contest lasted up to the month of June 1922, when I again obtained contact with it as described below.

I propose to describe how the Mulshi Peta dispute arose. I am mentioning a few details because though *Satyagraha* was often regarded as alien to the genius of the Maratha people and was a plank said to be lifted out of the platform of Gandhi's doctrines, the peasants of the Peta proved their complete capacity to practise *Satyagraha* in spite of their unfamiliarity with its *principles*.

Mulshi Peta is an area forming the extreme edge of the Poona plateau with a straight outfall of 2,000 feet. The Tatas thought that, owing to the sudden drop and the other features of the Peta, it was an ideal site for planting a hydro-electric station, to provide electric power to the surrounding districts and to distant Bombay. They, therefore, set in motion the Land Acquisition Act and acquired, with the help of Government, some holdings of the residents of the Peta, which were part of what had been historically known as Maval, the district from which the Great Shivaji had picked his Army. Having failed in their attempts to save the lands from compulsory acquisition, the peasants decided to conduct a *Satyagraha* on the basis of the slogan: "Either our land or our life" (अनि वा जमीन.)

The Land Acquisition Act, which had been put into motion by Government, had one serious defect from the point of view of the peasants, viz. that its machinery was worked exclusively by the revenue officials of the Government and sought no help or co-operation from any representative of the peasants concerned.

The struggle went on from day to day, evincing great courage and sacrifice on the part of the Mahratta peasants of Maval, briefly called Mawlas. Several meetings were held in Poona, Bombay and other places lending public support to the peasants and, at later stages, many impartial public leaders felt interested in the dispute.

The Peta contained an area of about 40,000 acres of land, actually under cultivation. The soil was some of the best. The water resources were inexhaustible. The chief crop was rice, besides some dry crops. The annual produce of rice was officially estimated to be 54½ thousand tons and was the chief source of supply to Poona and the adjoining country. It would thus appear that the valley was full of potentialities from the point of view of agricultural development and, con-

sequently, the opposition of the peasantry had an important economic side, overlooked in the rage and heat of the opposition on other grounds, but which deserved to be carefully studied and thoroughly considered side by side with the economic aspect of the hydro-electric project.

The Mawlas prized their lands over everything else, but they had special reasons for being attached to their lands, and they had a genuine fear that their emigration to unknown places might lead to a disintegration and even corruption of the simple, compact communal life they had been leading for many centuries in their own villages.

The Mawlas had been very little affected by modern civilization and all that it connoted. With the exception of the Mulshi village, which was the headquarters of the Revenue Officer in charge of the Peta, there was no Policeman, or Police Station, in any village, no toddy or liquor shop anywhere in the Peta, with the possible exception of one. The people, as a whole, had remained strictly sober, not being addicted to either alcoholic or narcotic drugs. There was hardly any complaint of theft or of the other vices—the curse of modern life—hardly any civil or criminal complaints before the Magistracy. It was widely recognised that the haphazard migration of the Mawlas peasantry to random places would strike a heavy blow and, perhaps, undermine altogether their simple and compact communal life. The events as they advanced had shown that the Tata scheme had more than abstract social objections, something of sentiment, something of genuine grievance, a sense of wrong and a good deal of the counter economic side behind it. The last mentioned objection mattered most and, consequently, many accorded their sympathy to the peasant population.

On studying the whole controversy, I had come to the conclusion that it should not be difficult for the parties concerned, viz. the Mawlas on the one side and the Government and the Tata Company on the other, to find out a *modus vivendi* if they approached each other in a spirit of mutual trust, genuine good-will and tolerance; that the display of such a spirit was more incumbent on the party cognisant of its strength and resources. That things had come to a deadlock was, as many of us thought, due to a mishandling of the situation by the authorities concerned at the very start, on account of their failure to appreciate not only the sentimental

objections of the peasantry, but the real vital issue between agriculture on the one hand and industry on the other.

I therefore thought that it would redound to the credit of the authorities concerned, principally the Government, if they came forward and gave an assurance to the Mawlas—not by mere word but by deed—of most liberal compensation, or the best procurable land for cultivation, and all other facilities for transport, colonising and acclimatising to the new surroundings. It was eminently a case where a genuine smile, a helping hand, above all, mutual trust and sympathy could achieve more than a mere show of force, however backed by the love of lucre, could.

The strength of feeling among the Mawlas was expressed in the resolute way and the terms in which they placed their grievances before the Tata Company and the Government. The following statement of their grievances had wide effect in the area concerned and outside.

You are out to bury our lands—our dearest and nearest—under the water, why not bury us along with them? You want to wound my land—the land of my forefathers, the land, where, in my quiet moments, I had thought would be born my children and childrens' children—You want to wound that land, why not you wound me first? At least my blood would soothe the pain of my Motherland. You want to put stone and mortar on the heart of my land. Place it on my heart first; your foundation will be all the stronger. An eternal curse is projected for my land.

With this resolve 2,000 Mawlas had been lying on the ground which was the scene of the Tata Company's activities.

At a certain stage of this controversy, in which the fighting peasants evinced the ideal conditions stipulated for Gandhi's Satyagraha, viz. purity, resoluteness, unity and desire to sacrifice, it was expected that they would draw great assistance from Gandhi and his followers, especially when a letter under Gandhi's signature appeared on 24 April in *Young India* as follows:

My heart goes out to these poor people. I wish the great house of the Tatas, instead of standing on their legal rights, will reason with the people themselves, and do whatever they wish in consultation with them. I have some experience of land acquisition acts. I had nearly 80 cases to deal with. There, the reason for the acquisition was not

industrial development but insanitation. I know that the people dispossessed never got the exact equivalents. What is the value of all boons that the Tata scheme claims to confer upon India, if it is to be at the unwilling expense of even one poor man? I dare say the problem of disease and poverty can be easily solved, and the survivors will live in luxury, if the three crore half-starved men and women, and lakhs of decrepit humanity were shot and their bodies utilized for manure, or their bones utilized for making knife-handles. And yet no one but a lunatic will put up such a suggestion. Is the case any weaker when men and women are not to be shot, but compulsorily dispossessed of their valued lands, about which sentiment, romance and all that makes life worth living have grown up? I suggest to the custodians of the great name that they would more truly advance India's interest if they will defer to the wishes of their weak and helpless countrymen.

Gandhi however contended himself only with writing this letter but none of his followers outside Maharashtra, openly professing allegiance to his doctrine of Satyagraha, came to the rescue of the Mawlas. This caused considerable disappointment and irritation amongst Maharashtrian circles. A more regrettable circumstance was that these followers of Gandhi justified their abstention by making ungracious comments on the Mulshi Satyagraha to the effect that it was not in keeping with Gandhi's orthodox doctrine of Satyagraha because the Mawlas were guilty of several acts of violence. Their other charge was that so many workers going to jail would hamper the constructive work of the Congress. These comments caused such a pitch of irritation that Moonje, one of the leaders and supporters of the Mulshi Peta agitation, had to make a special effort to meet this charge in a forceful speech which he delivered as President of a public meeting in Bombay. He observed:

As regards the objection raised that the Mulshi Satyagraha is not identical with the Congress movement of non-violent non-co-operation, in that the leaders of the Mulshi Satyagraha have planned active interference with Tata Company's work on the Mulshi dam and have encouraged filling up of pits dug out by Tata's labourers and have removed railway lines nearabout the field of work of the Tata Company so as to cause a hindrance to the Company in bringing up their men on the spot, it is fortunate that the Satyagrahis have not been charged by our critics with causing personal violence to any of the Tata Company's men in spite of serious and unbearable provocation. Mere words would be but a beggarly description, if I were to narrate the

inhuman brutalities committed on the poor innocent Mawla ladies by the greedy hirelings of the Company. The essence of the Congress movement of non-violent non-co-operation is to abstain from causing any personal violence inspired by any malice or hatred in respect of the opponent. This, it is admitted on all hands, has been strictly and scrupulously observed by the Mulshi Satyagrahis. But when the meaning of non-violence is extended to include even abstinence from causing any injury to property which is immediately concerned in the struggle, then I wonder whether even those who put this interpretation are really right in doing so, if they are not intentionally indulging in misrepresentation to discredit the Mulshi Satyagraha. What can be said of the mass Civil Disobedience of Bardoli for non-payment of taxes, if this is not in a sense causing injury to the Government? In the same way, cannot the insistence upon pure Swadeshi be misinterpreted to mean causing injury to the Lancashire manufacturers? To try to lower the prestige of the Government and Government institutions is nothing less than moral injury to it. In brief, the point that should be really noted is whether the Mulshi Satyagrahis, who have caused injury to the Tata's work, are causing injury for the mere pleasure of it, or is not the demolition of the dam in a sense merely that kind of injury which Mahatmaji has been speaking of—that if he cannot mend this system of Government he will not scruple to end it. Is this not causing an injury to the system of Government that is existing in India? Can any one of us have the face to charge Mahatmaji with even a desire to cause injury to his opponents? If anybody encroaches upon my field and digs a pit and if I go and fill it up, can I be said to be causing an injury to the poacher? Even Mahatmaji has not yet tabooed absolutely the exercise of the right of self-defence of person and property. The Satyagrahis have found that they cannot achieve their object without actual though non-violent interference with the working of the Tata Company; just as the Congress has found in regard to the Government, and that is enough justification for the Satyagrahis. So far as I can analyse their motive and action, I find no moral turpitude in it.

After all, this Mulshi Satyagraha is, in its wider sense, a kind of Congress work itself, with higher potentialities as regards its consequences and its effect upon the nation than the bald constructive programme of Congress today.

Moonje's criticism of the hostile attitude of non-Maharashtrian Congressmen was regarded as timely and fully justified by the way these Congressmen had left the Mawlas to fight their battle single-handed against the powerful combination of the Tata Company and the Government of Bombay. By the date of this meeting in Bombay, addressed by Moonje, the poor Mawla peasantry had done its best.

Their resources in courage, resistance and finances had almost been exhausted and gradually one could see a weakening in their opposition. If, at this time, the Conservative followers of Gandhi had come to their rescue, things might have turned out differently. Moonje's speech, however, had no effect on these Congressmen and gradually the opposition of the Mawlas weakened. In this state of things, Moonje wrote to me. I am quoting the following extract from one of his letters to me as indicating the state of desperation which the question had assumed at that time owing to the lack of outside support.

"I send herewith for your perusal a copy of my speech that I had written out for the Mulshi Conference. The agitation has been carried to such an extent now, that any surrender at this stage will cast a stain on the fair name of Maharashtra. But it must be understood that there is no desire anywhere to bring about the ruin of the Tata Company and, at the same time, it is quite natural to aspire to save the Mulshi land....

Some reasonable compromise could be effected in the Mulshi case and I am sure Maharashtra would not grudge to pay reasonable compensation to the Tata Company, which also should bear some proportion of the loss. The Company must give up this project and select some other part in the Sahyadri Hills for its project, not having so much popular sentiment attached to it.

"...the leading people of Maharashtra like you, must interest themselves in this popular struggle.

To this letter I wrote a reply two days later:

26th June, 1922

I shall be only too glad to be of use in saving the site from destruction, if that can be done. I am seeing immediately a couple of top men in the Tata Company, perhaps at the end of this week, and I shall let you know the result. I feel, however, that the Tatas have grown stronger with Government behind them than they were last November.

Shortly after I wrote this letter I saw, more than once, some leading men of the Tata Company, but, by that time, they had grown adamant, having realised that the Mulshi Satyagraha had not secured the backing of the Congress. As stated above, Gandhi had given it his verbal support by a solitary letter but he did not give the agitation an all-India

character, as he had done in the case of the Ali Brothers' Karachi speeches, when he issued an appeal to the people of India to support the movement. While discussing the matter with the representatives of the Tata Company, I could see that this fact was at the back of their minds and gave them strength to oppose all efforts for a reasonable compromise. This noticeable abstention of Congressmen left, in the minds of Maharashtra, a deep sense of wrong that, at the very moment of crisis, the movement received very little support from Congressmen outside Maharashtra and, in consequence of this behaviour, Maharashtra realised, more vividly than ever before, that, with all its devotion and sacrifice, it was, and must be content to be, the Cinderella of the Gandhi movement. This feeling had a great deal to do with the subsequent history of the Congress movement in Maharashtra, which will be dealt with in the later chapters of this narrative.

My speech-making activities continued and on 4 November 1921 I presided at a public meeting of the Parsi Rajakeeya Sabha—a memorial meeting for Pherozeshah Mehta. I was anxious that the true teachings of Pherozeshah Mehta's life should be placed before the younger generation and I bewailed the fact that leadership of his eminence and sacrifice was not available to his party at the present time. Pherozeshah's great merit, I said, was his clear and intimate knowledge of the British character such as it then was. As far as an outsider could judge, he appeared to be largely a product of European methods and culture, taking those expressions in their meritorious sense. His knowledge of English literature and his power of adapting the same to the requirements of the moment were well revealed in his address as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress Session in Bombay in the year 1904.

Few men of his time understood so well the character of his political opponents, their virtues as well as weaknesses. The great control which he exercised over official arrogance and aggression and which was kept intact during the whole of his life, in spite of a despicable official caucus against him, was due largely to his clear insight into the working of the British mind and the tactful way in which he utilized his knowledge. He belonged to that class of Indian leaders whom Macaulay, in his Minute of 1835, described as "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in

opinions, in morals and in intellect." This class, for a long time, had borne the burden of acting as intermediaries between the people and the Government. It, however, had fast disappeared, partly because the methods of British Rule in this country had grossly deteriorated and there was nothing to "interpret", and partly because Government had chosen to become their own interpreters, through salaried officers and Durbaries—the Publicity Bureaus, Aman Sabhas and District Officials. My speech went on:

Pherozeshah's life, however, will long remain a great landmark in our political history, in which we shall yearly turn back to his work in grateful and reverent memory. But while we do so, we shall recognize that we have passed that landmark. Like all landmarks, it has its value as reminding us of past efforts and the heights to which Indian patriotism could rise in those times; but other problems have since come on the horizon, requiring a different kind of solution and a different variety of leadership, not less wanting, than in Pherozeshah's time, in courage, faith, capacity and sympathy. The few years which have elapsed since his death have seen a wonderful change come over this country. Perhaps, he would have been himself staggered, if he had lived to witness it. What his own attitude would have been now it is difficult to say, as it is profitless to surmise. One can only say that, with his characteristic freshness and vitality, he would perhaps have suited his leadership to the growing requirements of his countrymen or else he would have stood aside from the mighty current, staggered at its volume, perhaps rejoicing at its depths, but unable to keep pace with its velocity.

While the country was pursuing the Nagpur resolutions and the full intensification of the non-co-operation movement, it was announced that the Prince of Wales would arrive in Bombay on 17 November 1921. But for some time previously this Country had been in great commotion over this visit. Meetings were held in various parts of Bombay and piles of foreign cloth were daily burnt at various places. In fact this subject had been engaging the attention of Bombay for several months. I remember being present at another meeting of the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau in Bombay. A press report of this meeting stated:

Nearly two hours were wasted in discussion at the Chamber without deciding whether the Chamber should give an Address to the Prince of Wales or not. No new arguments were brought forward in support

of the Committee's action, favouring the voting of an address to the Prince of Wales. . . . It was a fight between the selfish interests of the merchants and the higher call of the country.... After further discussion, the original motion of Tairsee cancelling the Committee's resolution to give an address to the Prince was put to the vote.... There were 111 votes in favour of Tairsee's resolution and equal number against it. The Chairman gave his casting vote against Tairsee's resolution, with the result that the resolution was declared lost.

On 14 November I presided at a meeting in Bombay connected with the visit of the Prince of Wales. I pointed out the grievances from which India had been suffering which had remained unredressed. It is absolute madness, I said, for the Government to imagine that the Prince's visit can be made popular at this critical time. A contented India would have invited the Prince of Wales to be their honoured guest as an emissary from one free country to another, to cement, by his popularity and urbane behaviour, of which India was well aware, the friendly ties between the two. But the time is so inopportune when the country is in mourning, smarting under a deep sense of wrong.

Dealing with the prevalent wishful thinking in connection with the Prince's visit, I said:

Some people are foolish enough to imagine that this popular Prince has been brought here to placate public opinion by announcing a further instalment of Self-Government as an advance over the Government of India Act, but very little hope could be reasonably entertained that the policy of the Indian Government would enable the Prince to indulge in anything more than empty inanities. Personally, to some of us, it was an unpleasant duty to join in an agitation against welcoming so eminent a guest. It was so contrary to our sense of delicacy and decorum and also so opposed to the traditional Indian sentiments of courtesy and hospitality. But we regard it as due to our self-respect and honour to protest against this action of the Government, so well calculated to mislead the Prince and the entire civilized world. We owe this not only to our own sense of honour and self-respect but, may I add, also to the high position of the Prince and the popularity he enjoys throughout the world, to inform him of the hollow and the deceptive nature of the reception of which he is likely to be a victim.

I thus avoided all reference to the action of the leaders of the Parsi community which, as stated above, had become the subject matter of many speeches delivered from different platforms in Bombay about this time.

On 17 November 1921 the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay. The matter had caused such a commotion of public feeling that a women's meeting had to be held under the presidency of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, at which my wife, who rarely delivered public speeches, proposed the following resolution indicative of women's sentiments in the matter:

When the whole country is in deep mourning for the loss of innocent lives in the Punjab, Delhi, Dhariwal and when other national wrongs, including those of the Khilafat, have not been fully redressed, when the Government of India, under the much boasted regime of Lord Reading, have embarked on a policy of repression, whereby hundreds of our countrymen have been compelled to suffer, in jail, harsh and barbarous treatment unbecoming to their status as political prisoners, when every attempt is made to stifle the united voice of the people finding expression through the medium of the two great national Assemblies, viz. the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League, when the people are justly clamouring for the early attainment of full Swaraj, when throughout the British Empire Indians are being deplorably humiliated in spite of India being theoretically recognised as an equal partner in the British Empire, when people are being hampered and harassed and prosecuted for their resolve to spread the gospel of Swadeshi and to eradicate the great drink evil, when the troubles in Malabar are not yet over and when famine is raging in different parts of the country—the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to India at the present juncture and against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of our people, is, in the opinion of this meeting, inopportune and ill-advised and seems to have been contrived by the authorities solely for the political purpose of falsely representing to the outside world that India, under the alleged new era of reforms, is contented, happy and prosperous. Hence this public meeting of the women of Bombay, representing all classes and creeds, unanimously protests against the unjustifiable action of the Bombay Municipal Corporation in voting an address of loyal welcome to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in the name of the citizens of Bombay and this meeting most earnestly requests all the citizens of Bombay that, out of sheer national self-respect, they should not take any part in any of the functions held in honour of the Prince and as the carrying out of them would involve a criminal waste of lakhs of rupees which could well have been fruitfully spent in alleviating the acute distress of thousands of our countrymen in Malabar, Khulna and other famine-afflicted parts of the country.

It will thus be seen that even in this resolution and the speech which my wife made in support of it, all provocative references to the action of the Parsi community were car-

fully eliminated. Notwithstanding all these precautions, however, what happened on the day of the arrival of the Prince of Wales was most regrettable. It has been described in Setalvad's *Recollections and Reflections* (page 315) from which I shall quote with due acknowledgement:

The Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay on that day, clashes occurred between Non-co-operators and those citizens who were taking part in the reception of the Prince. There were riots at Pydhuni and other places. The fury of the mob was specially directed against the Parsees who were taking part in the welcome of the Prince. Gandhi was then in Bombay and he went with Soonderdas, Solicitor, in a motor car to Pydhuni where the riots were in progress, in order to tell the mobs to be non-violent. By the time his car reached the disturbed area and before Gandhi could preach non-violence to the infuriated crowd, stones began to fall on his motor car and he had to abandon his mission. He then issued to the Press the following appeal to the *Mawalis* (hooligans) of Bombay:

"Whether you call yourself a Hindu, Mussalman, Parsi, Christian or Jew, you have certainly failed to consider even your own religious interests. You have used the mass awakening for your own lust, for plunder, rapine and even indulging in your worse animal appetites. Some of my friends would, I know, accuse me of ignorance of human nature. If I believed the charge, I would plead guilty and retire from human assemblies and return only after acquiring knowledge of human nature."

Gandhi then went on to state that he had no difficulty in controlling the Indian *Mawalis* of South Africa and concluded by asking the *Mawalis* of Bombay to stop retaliation and give him and his workers a chance to work among them. Setalvad adds, "What unpractical idealism to believe that hooligans would take his advice!"

This independent testimony of Setalvad confirms statements in the entries in my diary written at my house at Thakurdwar, which was one of the worst scenes of hooliganism against the Parsis and their retaliation. These entries record what I saw with my own eyes:

Thursday, 17 November, 1921: Arrival of the Prince of Wales in Bombay.

Great popular commotion. Riot by hooligans. Eurasians retaliating with connivance of the Police; firing by the Military.

Friday, 18 November: At night Parsi hooligans let loose in the street.

Gandhi's non-violence on trial. Parsis retaliate and are bent on mischief. Police come on the scene after a very long time.

Saturday, 19 November: The whole Parsi hooligans had possession of this locality and in front of my house practised zoolum with the aid of the Military. My house was surrounded by Parsi residences and was consequently the scene of Parsi retaliation. In the afternoon, a Bombay friend called when he learned that the locality was the scene of uncommon rowdyism. Contrary to my warning, he insisted on going alone through the streets. So I came out with him with my Colt automatic pistol, to be useful in case of need. He was anxious to see what was happening at Chandanwadi, a Parsi quarter about two furlongs' distant from my house. Before reaching there we had to pass a Military squad. The officer who commanded it knew me in England, so he asked my friend and myself not to approach Chandanwadi and he gave me a warning not to use the automatic even if my life was threatened. It would lead to disastrous consequences. Notwithstanding this warning, my friend insisted on approaching Chandanwadi and naturally I did not want to leave him alone. When we reached there we found hundreds of Parsi hooligans, humorously called *Handa Master* (powerful men employed for lifting large pots of water on occasions of festivities). When they saw my friend with a white cap which he would not remove, they rushed towards us and we were attacked. My friend received a short cut which brought out blood. I was belaboured with a bamboo stick which made me semi-unconscious but no blood came out. A lawyer's clerk living in that locality made me out and interceded to plead my rescue. My friend and myself were taken to a bone-setter's shop nearby and the occupant very kindly helped us. We both then decided to meet Gandhi at his residence at Gamdevi and paint a true picture of how his preaching of non-violence had fallen on deaf ears on both sides. On the way, my friend's wound was dressed by a well-known Doctor's son and then we both called on Gandhi. On seeing blood on my friend's clothes and my contused wounds he was much upset. We quieted him down and requested him personally to visit these scenes. Curiously enough, with a naivety uncommon in a great leader like him, he inquired whether if he sent one of his women friends, the mob would listen. We said, "Only your presence there may quiet the mob." But he was prevented by some Congress women from venturing out to meet the fury of the Parsi crowd. The whole night was made hideous by Parsi hooligans. The police restored quiet at a very late hour.

In some non-Parsi areas things were, of course, equally bad for the Parsis. Gandhi was also not quite pleased with the idea of seeing the crowd under the complete protection of the police. It hurt his self-respect.

While this was happening, Lord Reading, who had come to

Bombay to receive the Prince of Wales, was very much upset at the happenings in Bombay. Setalvad records in his *Reminiscences and Reflections* (p. 316) that, "I was at Government House and Sir George Lloyd, the Governor, told me how, a little while ago, Lord Reading sat in the chair which I was occupying with his head in both his hands, and how he broke down at what had happened." Setalvad proceeds to observe, "One can well understand the feelings of Lord Reading, if it was true, as was said at the time, that he had advocated the coming of the Prince of Wales to India at this juncture, in opposition to the contrary opinion of several Provincial Governors."

In contrast with these happenings of which I was a personal witness, the following account would prove interesting as coming from a Congress historian:

From every part of the City, reports of frightful excesses, of murder, of rioting, continued to pour until 10 in the night. Gandhi had been an eye-witness to such dreadful scenes, and the agony which he suffered was unbearable. Thrown into a state of despondency, he kept awake till 1 in the morning. Weighed down by grief and remorse, he went on recalling the high hopes with which he had been directing the movement. But those hopes had now vanished into thin air. The spirit of intolerance had gone on increasing unchecked. Why had he not had from the very first the sagacity to stand up against every such exhibition of intolerance and violence? Such was the charge he went on repeating against himself in tones of bitter despair and self-reproach.

The Congress chronicler continues:

The incident had made the deepest impression on Gandhi. If, at Bombay, mob violence was being engineered and directed by skilled hands from behind, then the launching of Civil Disobedience at Bardoli (which he [Gandhi] had intended at that time) must remain a chimera. He thought, "The Lord has saved me from a dire calamity. I was most unwilling to come to Bombay; but God wanted me to see the sights I have seen, and dragged me to Bombay. If today I had stayed at Ahmedabad, I might have easily belittled the happenings in Bombay and paid little heed to them. But the terrible scenes that I have seen enacted before my own eyes could not possibly be put aside, and who knows what further disasters would await us if at this moment Civil Disobedience should be resorted to at Bardoli."

That very night, the Congress historian adds, "He cancelled

his programme of visiting Surat and Bardoli and sent his son Devadas to Surat to see to it that all preparations for Civil Disobedience were suspended." The chronicler proceeds:

The next morning, November 18, the Parsis, the Anglo-Indians and the Jewish residents were adequately armed and, frantic with rage, were thirsting for revenge. Meanwhile Congressmen went round the city, trying to pacify the people. But the situation was hopeless. Reprisals led to reprisals and there was no knowing how things would end. Gandhi felt as if all his strength had vanished. He asked, "Why was I unable permanently to influence the crowd? Where was the power of Ahimsa in me? What was I to do? I could not, I would not ask the aggrieved people to seek Government aid. We have no Panchayats to deal out justice. There was no one I could approach who could bring about peace. If I allowed myself to be torn to pieces by justly incensed Parsis and Christians, I would only give rise to greater bloodshed. Whilst as a soldier I must avoid no unavoidable risk, I must not recklessly run the risk of being killed. Then what was I to do?"

The Congress narrative proceeds to state that at last, to his rescue, came the idea of a fast.

"If I may not give myself to be killed through human agency, I must give myself to God to be taken away by refusing to eat, till He heard my prayer. For me, a bankrupt, that was the only thing left. I could not draw upon the people, on their innocence. They dishonoured the cheque I presented personally on the 17th. I must now somehow or other recoup lost credit or die in the attempt. I must draw upon God for further credit to enable me to transact His business. I could only do so by humbling myself, crawling in the dust before Him, denying myself the food He has given. I must in a thousand ways show Him that I am in earnest, and if I am not found worthy to conduct His business, ask Him to recall me and re-fashion me according to my worth and His will."

Gandhi declared his resolve to fast on November 19.

It is not possible to describe to you [he said] the agony I have suffered during the past two days. I am writing this at 3-30 a.m. in perfect peace. After two hours' prayer and meditation I have found it. I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water till Hindus and Mussalmans of Bombay had made peace with the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, and till the Non-co-operators have made peace with the Co-operators. The Swaraj that I have witnessed during the last

two days has stunk in my nostrils. Hindu-Muslim unity has been a menace to the handful of Parsis, Christians and the Jews. The non-violence of the non-co-operators has been worse than the violence of the co-operators. For, with non-violence on our lips, we have terrorized those who have differed from us, and, in doing so, we have denied our God. There is only one God for us all, whether we find Him through the Koran, the Zend-Avesta, the Talmud, or the Gita. And He is a God of Truth and Love. I have no interest in living, save for proving this faith in me. I have spoken and written against the Englishman's institutions, especially the one he has set up in India. I shall continue to do so if I live. But you must not mistake my condemnation of the system for that of the man. My religion requires me to love him [Englishman] as I love myself. I would deny God if I do not attempt to prove it at this critical moment. And the Parsis? I have meant every word I have said about them. Hindus and Mussalmans will be unworthy of freedom if they do not defend them [Parsis] and their honour with their lives. Unless Hindus and Mussalmans have expressed full and free repentance, I cannot face again the appealing eyes of Parsi men and women that I saw on the 17th inst. as I passed through them.

You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality. I invite every Hindu and Mussalman to do likewise but I do not want anyone to fast. Fast is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Musalman citizen to retire to his home, and ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the depth of his very heart.

I invite my fellow workers not to waste a single word of sympathy for me. I need or deserve none. But I invite them to make a ceaseless effort to regain control over the turbulent elements. This is a terribly true struggle. There is no room for sham or humbug in it. Before we can make any further progress with our struggle, we must cleanse our heart,

This frank confession of Gandhi's failure was not at all ill-timed, for, during the long interval of nearly a year, while I was agitating on the question of National Education, public sentiment amongst critical Congress circles had been undergoing a rapid change and, in several places specially in Maharashtra, arose the desire to have the original programme of non-co-operation modified in certain particulars where it had failed to be as efficacious as was expected. The feeling was growing stronger and stronger and ultimately the votaries of a change arranged a large Conference at Shahapur in the

Thana District. At this Conference gathered many elements from Bombay and Maharashtra and I was persuaded to accept the Presidentship of this Conference. It lasted from 20 to 22 November 1921. The chief function of this Conference, which was called at the close of the period of one year promised by Gandhi, was to review in a calm and dispassionate manner, the progress made so far. In the Presidential address I observed:

Speaking generally, the progress of the movement had been beyond the expectations of its friends and enemies. Peoples' self-respect had been raised, their self-confidence heightened and latent spiritual forces set free throughout the country and the courage, sacrifice, earnestness, purity and high purpose, actuating its selfless author, had found a reflection in many minds, prepared to take an earnest view of the situation in the country.

I then mentioned some prominent details of the success which the movement had attained during the year which its critics were apt to ignore. I observed:

In your own district [Thana], immense work had been done; e.g. your picketing work against drink was done with quiet firmness. It has succeeded in checking largely, and I hope permanently, the growth of the vice among the people and your *bona fides* in this behalf have also been recognised by your Collector, agreeing to withdraw his order against picketing. During our last tour in your districts we spoke to large masses of villagers of the message which the movement had for the poor and afflicted. To them, this movement can have a meaning only so far as it would bring them more happiness, better prosperity, more suitable education, more sanitary environments, better medical help, and a more rapid growth in political consciousness than they found under the present system of Government.

It is inevitable that the movement like the present one should have many aspects varying according to the intelligence of its votary. To the educated man, who takes a prominent part in Indian politics, the movement is no doubt an attitude of the mind and not so much of a programme or a creed. He aspires to place the Nation's claim to freedom on its own capacity for suffering and sacrifice.

However, when dispassionately judged by past experience, it will be found that some details of the programme have not achieved the expected success. On the contrary, they have formed weak links in the chain. The soreness which some of these details have caused, still remains and operates to divide our ranks, making some lukewarm

or unwilling to throw their whole heart into the movement. If these co-workers of ours could be placated by a revision of the Congress programme so that most of the earnest-minded workers for the cause could substantially agree to its adoption, it would be a great advantage.

For instance, the boycott of schools and colleges has not succeeded and even persons, of known and undoubted loyalty to the cause, complain that the action of the Congress workers has caused more harm than good. They concentrated, it is felt, too much on the disruption of existing institutions and less on the creation and maintenance of new ones on National lines. Speaking of Bombay alone, we let pass the psychological moment when we could have founded and reared up an excellent college with various branches of study. Public enthusiasm was ripe for it in the early part of the year, but we let it evaporate in declamation and emotional exaltation. 50,000 boys are out in idleness, says Sir Ashutosh Mukerji of Calcutta University. Some may glorify this catastrophe, but there are many who regard this disruptive event with sad dismay. We have experimented too much in youthful sacrifice. We now find a large number of boys in the country, who are practically loafing about in the streets, with a vague ambition to do something patriotic.

Likewise our ban on lawyers has not attained success. Few lawyers, whose sacrifice of their practice would have added strength to the Congress cause, have responded to the call. Litigation has not gone down. In many places it has very much increased. The prestige of British Courts in civil suits has not been destroyed and cannot so easily be destroyed. The call upon the lawyer was put the wrong way, as if in pursuing his profession he was acting sinfully and must atone for it by a complete withdrawal from his profession. The result was that, out of sheer self-respect, many really good lawyers have declined to respond to the call. Lawyers have become the "Pariahs" of our present political life.

This part of the Congress programme has created a foul atmosphere of hypocrisy, intolerance, imposture and conceit in the Congress camp, in which modesty, self-respect and honesty often times find it hard to hold their place. The Courts of Justice, the Congress called into existence, have faded away, not having had enough support and are a mockery.

The failure of these parts of the Programme is now practically admitted and they are now pushed into the background by general behaviour. It would be better if, in revising the Programme in the next Session of the Congress, these limbs, which have ceased to function or respond to the laws of our growth, are boldly amputated. The fight requires to be carried on in manifold ways. Some may carry it on in the Council, face to face with the officials. Why can't Non-Co-operation, in its proper sense, be practised in the Councils? Pherozeshah Mehta, when he left the Council Hall with his colleagues on a memorable

occasion or when, face to face with the then Home Member, he mercifully uncloaked the preposterous pretensions of the Bureaucracy, was fighting with weapons and a spirit which many non-co-operators of the true and accredited type may envy.

I then referred to the several activities indicating that we had departed from the original rigour of our Programme and we were with complacency putting up with such departures.

This is not a plea on my behalf alone but practically on behalf of several people especially in Maharashtra who had undergone similar experience and changes of view. It might be that the number of such dissentients was larger in Maharashtra than perhaps in other Provinces, but that was not because these men in Maharashtra were weaker than elsewhere, but because the critical faculties of Maharashtra were not inhibited by loyalty to the goal.

We are now pleading for the revision of the Programme so as to make it comprehensive, elastic and real. Coming to details, I may mention a few instances in which, in our opinion, a modification is desirable. This is only a plea for reconsideration. The exact form of the modification must be left to future discussion. I would, therefore, suggest as follows:

(1) Foreign propaganda so summarily put an end to at the last Congress be resumed. The Indian view has to be put forward before the civilized world. The Government are doing their propaganda abroad and we ought to do ours.

(2) The time-limit of one year be abandoned.

(3) The elections to Legislative Bodies, when a chance would occur, should be contested, with the limitation, however, that, in the Provinces, unless complete autonomy is introduced, Congressmen should not accept office.

(4) A very large modification of the educational boycott, including total abrogation of the compulsory part of it. Attention should be concentrated more on the creation of national institutions than on the withdrawal of students as a set propaganda. Side by side with this, an intensive propaganda should be carried out in the Councils and outside, having for its object the popularization of the Universities by change of the Act governing them and also the nationalization of the existing system of State-aided education, so as to bring it into greater accord with the present-day requirements and aspirations of the people.

(5) A large modification of the ban against lawyers, so as to admit of several grades of sacrifice. The Congress ought to modify its call so as to make it possible for all honest-minded lawyers to bear the burden of the country's cause commensurate with their capacity to sacrifice.

I mentioned one instance where the orthodox boycott of the Congress had been departed from with good results. I referred to the long and interesting statement made by the Ali Brothers and their co-accused in the trial at Karachi:

Who could urge, that this was, though contrary to the present Congress Programme, a futile step and yet these statements had all the features of a lawyer-made defence as an aid to the Court? The evidence was discussed, legal objections raised, relevancy commented on, the Prosecution evidences answered. All this assistance was given to the Court, helping it arrive at the truth and justice, precisely in the same way as a practising lawyer aids judicial administration. Similarly, in the Dharwar Trial, the accused, most of whom the judge admits in his judgment, were probably innocent, were induced in the name of patriotism to call no evidence, though it consisted, I am told, of most respectable and convincing testimony proving their alibi if tendered. It would have clearly proved the innocence of these sturdy and patriotic men whose active services had been lost to the country by their unjust convictions. It is now widely acknowledged that self-immolation is not always the best form of self-sacrifice and if the aim of the movement is deliberately to immolate brave men, a better means can be found for their martyrdom than their undeserved conviction in a Court of Law.

A still more curious phase of the [Dharwar] Trial is that though the accused called no evidence at the proper time in heroic disregard of the consequences, yet, at the close of the trial, as the noose closed round their neck, they were persuaded through their spokesmen to enter on a long and elaborate address for the defence, devoid of the support of their untendered evidence. On what rational grounds can, therefore, a statement be permitted and yet the material evidence supporting it be tabooed?

I have sufficiently indicated the unaccountable lengths to which this doctrine has been pushed and the serious injury it has caused. All that our cause has a right to insist upon is a stern, dignified, courageous and honest defence, leaving the detailed methods thereof to be determined according to the merits of each case.

These are some of the modifications which, in our opinion, are desirable. They are not meant to be exhaustive, but only indicate the lines and principles on which such modifications should take place. The desire is to strengthen the Programme by dropping out those adjuncts which have ceased to respond to our requirements.

I then referred to the Karachi Trial of the Ali Brothers resulting in the acquittal of the accused on the important

charge of conspiracy to seduce His Majesty's troops and I went on to observe that—

it had caused a deep wound in the prestige of Government. The lucid judgment which has found the accused guilty [on minor charges], proceeds, however, to observe: "Some of the accused seem learned and pious men and all seem esteemed citizens to whom the country would owe much, if they followed the right path and Islam; the Empire and this country might have been profited by them, had they not taken up the attitude they had done. Yet the accused could not but deeply regret that some of them were at the Bar in this Court instead of being high in the service of the Councils of His Majesty."

It is not usual for a convicting judgment to shower encomiums on the guilty and Government must not complain if the result of the trial materially increased the reputation of the accused.

One can well understand the crushing strain of anxiety which Gandhi has had to bear during the last few months. He has made the country's anguish and sacrifice his own and this must necessarily throw a tremendous weight on his mind. This will account for the sorrowful strain, very unusual in his case, in which he referred to his problematic demise at the end of the year if Swarajya was not obtained by that time. May we, however, assure him in all earnestness that there is no need for despondency and sorrow and that we want him long to remain with us and inspire our action. His cause has prospered and Swarajya is already in the process of being won.

I then concluded my speech as follows:

I have done. I shall only remind you, in conclusion, that we are on the eve of Gandhi undertaking an important part of his programme by starting Civil Disobedience in a District in Surat. We can only hope that the resistance to law will not be so undertaken as to be widely interpreted as a sort of Charter for general lawlessness.

We value at this stage above everything else the personal safety and freedom of our leader rather than a premature undertaking which may involve his removal and restraint. It is of the utmost importance that we should set a proper value upon his personal freedom. He may not value it for his own sake, but his associates do regard it as their best asset, because he is the centre as well as the circumference of this movement. His genius has guided it, his sacrifice has ennobled it and his wisdom has saved it from pitfalls. The country has had only a year's training in his counsels of non-violent resistance—far too short a period for his countrymen to imbibe his spirit, in a manner worthy of his teachings. May we, therefore, hope that, in launching on this undertaking, he will seriously consider this aspect of the case.

As said above, my speech at Shahapur expressed the views of a large number of Congressmen full of devotion to Gandhi and his general policy, but holding strong views that the detailed programme required an alteration in the light of the experience of the previous few months. My speech of course received condemnation in orthodox Congress circles but obtained approval in other directions. The most encouraging circumstance, however, was that Gandhi himself conveyed a message to me that he had read my speech from a copy which I had sent him and it made him "think furiously", specially my disapproval of certain parts of his Programme of Boycotts. At a later stage he wrote in *Young India* about my speeches at Shahapur and a little later at Akola. I was content to receive recognition from Gandhi.

The following newspapers representing different outlooks on Gandhi's Programme offered useful criticism on the speech. The *Lokamanyu* of Bombay in two articles dated 23 November and 6 December, the *Indu Prakash* also in two articles dated 23 and 24 November, the *Dnyanaprakash* in an article on the 25th, Mrs. Besant's *New India* on the 26th, the *Indian Social Reformer* on the 27th and the *Leader* of Allahabad on the 28th and the *Praja Mitra* on the 30th. I am mentioning these papers because they represented different outlooks on Gandhi's Programme. A complete Marathi version of my speech had been made available to the Marathi Press and this had the effect of my thoughts permeating throughout Maharashtra which was not unprepared to receive them with attention.

The *Dnyanaprakash* which was, as mentioned above, an important organ of the "Liberal" school, accepted my point of view, especially regarding the changes to be made in the Programme, but raised the question that, if such changes were made, how much of Non-Co-operation would remain? In making this comment it lost sight of Gandhi's utterances that the chief feature of his Non-Co-operation lay not so much in the details of the Programme as in the attitude of mind behind it.

Mrs. Besant's *New India* made the following comments:

Unless the elements which [as my speech had pointed out] had made the movement hysterical are deleted and if the leaders do not base themselves on the facts of present conditions, the whole idea is bound either to fizzle out or lead to a very terrible impasse from which libera-

tion will only come by cruel sufferings. It has been well said of Mr. Gandhi that he is a curious mixture of impossible idealism and of practical mindedness equally impossible of application. He idealizes the power of the people for self-control and hence makes the mistake of addressing them in terms which inflame their minds and feelings beyond all possibility of anybody's control and on the other side, sketches out a scheme of practice like the Boycott, so tempting as to be taken up without proper thought of the consequences. As a result of the first, we have hooliganism and, as a result of the second, we have clothing burnt while the poor are without garments.

The paper ended with the remark, "The admitted failure in Bombay gives a suitable pause for thought. Mr. Jayakar has spoken what is in many minds. We trust the opportunity may be seized."

The *Tribune* of Lahore observed:

It is because Mahatma Gandhi has not made these allowances [for human weakness] that he has often made calculations which events have falsified. He has made no secret of his own disappointment or that of others at the response which the nation made to the first four parts of his Programme, the renunciation of titles and honours, the boycott of Councils, the boycott of Courts of Law and the boycott of schools and colleges, nor has he made a secret of his disappointments at the inadequate response made by the nation even to such parts of his revised Programme as those relating to temperance, the removal of untouchability and Swadeshi, parts in regard to which the country is far more united than it was in regard to the other forms. Now the greatest disappointment of all, one which goes to the root of all others has come.

Commenting on this view, the *Indian Social Reformer* of Bombay observed:

Every single failure or disappointment the movement has met with is due to one or other of the following causes. It is directly traceable to the fact that Mahatma Gandhi has not been able to try any of the earlier items in his Programme sufficiently long and has had to jump from one to another with the speed of lightning. The original understanding was that, if and when one part of the Programme was fulfilled and yet the Bureaucracy did not yield, the next step would be taken. In reality, the next step was invariably taken long before the earlier part was even a substantial success and long before the question of the Bureaucracy yielding or not yielding would arise. It is to the same cause that we owe the decision to start the Civil Dis-

obedience Movement itself. Mahatma Gandhi made it perfectly clear that he did not consider the country fit for Civil Disobedience. Why did he then start this part of the movement, for the simple reason, as stated in the Preamble to the resolution, that only a month and a half remained for the realization of the promise made at Nagpur. In other words, just because the promise was made which ought not to have been made, a step must be taken which Mahatma Gandhi himself considers premature.

The Reformer continues:

Mr. Jayakar's address does not touch upon the Bombay riots. The speech was evidently prepared before these riots took place, although they were before it was delivered. Mr. Jayakar himself had personal experience of their violence. Nevertheless, he also demands a complete revision of the Programme including the elimination of the time-table. That Programme, as he points out, is set at naught by many in practice. We trust that these earnest exhortations will receive the attention they deserve. The omissions suggested by Mr. Jayakar virtually amount to the abandonment of Non-Co-operation as it is understood at present.

The Leader of Allahabad (Liberal in politics), writing about my speech on 28 November under the caption, "A Non-Co-operation Leader's Admission", stated as follows:

Mr. Jayakar's observations show that light has begun to dawn though slowly in the Non-Co-operation Camp and experience is teaching wisdom to those who ignored the hard realities of the situation. We believe that in making his suggestions Mr. Jayakar represented the views of an appreciable section of Non-Co-operators, but we do not think that in the present stage his suggestions have any chance of acceptance in the Congress. For, if they are accepted, a microscope will be needed to find out the principle of Non-Co-operation in the altered scheme of the extremist activity. Why not admit frankly that the country is not yet prepared for direct action and assert in a direct and straightforward manner that practical politics requires that the Congress should revert to the constitutional line of action.

The Praja Mitra, an independent Bombay paper not unfriendly to the cause of Non-Co-operation, in its issue of 30 November 1921, after quoting my speech and the suggestions I had made at Shahapur, observed as follows:

Proceeding from what may be justly regarded as the inner circle of the Non-Co-operation Movement, these modifications and reservations

suggested are distinctly arresting and we are of opinion that Mr. Jayakar has rendered an important service not only to his own movement but to the country at large. As a trained and successful lawyer Mr. Jayakar indicts a scathing criticism of the action of the accused in the later stages of the [Karachi] trial and we recommend his remarks to those who have been loudly proclaiming that the conduct, behaviour and attitude of the accused leaders at Karachi were worthy of all admiration. Mr. Jayakar's address makes no reference to the recent lamentable riots in Bombay, but on this subject we have the unimpeachable first-hand testimony of Mr. Gandhi himself who has taken all the blame on himself and has candidly admitted that his doctrine of non-violence has not been appreciated by the turbulent sections of the community. The dangers of the new movement have been correctly indicated by Mr. Jayakar and the entire programme of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation will have to be radically modified if success is to be attained by peaceful constitutional agitation.

At Shahapur were present a number of men like Kelkar who had given complete support to Gandhi as far as they could and that Conference was the outcome of a general desire to recommend, for the consideration of Gandhi, changes which had become necessary during the working of Non-Co-operation in previous months. There was great enthusiasm at the Conference. It will, therefore, be appropriate to reproduce a few entries in my diary relating to the proceedings:

Sunday, 20 November: Left for Shahapur by the morning train. Reached at 9-30. Kelkar and other Delegates from Maharashtra travelling together. News of my injury in the Parsi riots published in the morning papers had reached the people. So, a lot of them met us at several stations expressing sympathy. Great enthusiasm on the way. At Shahapur put up in a shanty near the Mandap. Conference began at 2-30. Subjects Committee at night. Feeling divided on the change of Programme.

Monday, 21 November: Shahapur Conference, second day. Sitting, morning and evening. Resolution altering items of Non-Co-operation Programme lost and one extending principle adopted.

The *Bombay Chronicle* in its issue of 23 November under the caption, "On the Brink, Conciliation the Only Way—Mr. Jayakar's Address", reports the proceedings at Shahapur as follows:

About 700 Delegates and about a thousand visitors were present including 100 ladies. Mr. Jayakar was elected President. Messages

regretting inability to attend and expressing good wishes for the success of the Conference came from Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Patel, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and others. The President, Mr. Jayakar, reviewed the political situation and emphasized the tremendous success of the principle and policy of Non-Co-operation as was evident from the great awakening in the country. He then suggested various changes in the Congress Programme, which he said became inevitable in the interest of surer success of the movement.

The Shahapur Conference was finished on 21 November and I returned to Bombay on the 23rd and within a week left again for Akola. My diary entries relating to the Akola Conference are as follows:

Wednesday, 30 November: Left for Akola by Nagpur Mail. Dr. Velkar, Sathaye, L. G. Khare and others also joined.

Thursday, 1 December: At Akola.

Reached at 5-15 a.m. Put up with Dr. K. D. Padhye—a neat, careful and hospitable host. House clean and spacious. Meals simple and clean. Attended Preliminary Conference at Kelkar's house. Important preliminaries discussed. Conference began at 2. Lasted till 8. 18 speakers took part. I spoke last. Opinion favourable to change of Programme. Nagpur men all strong.

Friday, 2 December: At Akola.

Formal discussion of Bhopatkar's resolution about amending Programme of Non-Co-operation. Carried by majority. Kelkar as Chairman was very weak.

Saturday, 3 December: Joint Conference of C. P. and Berar. Began at 3. Shriramji President Reception Committee. Speech took an hour. Well received. Meetings were strong and firm. Subjects Committee from 9-30 to 12 mid-night. I in the chair finished work with speech putting resolutions from the Chair.

Sunday, 4 December: At Akola.

Joint Conference of Berar and Nagpur. Commenced at 9 in the Morning. Lasted up to 2-15. Proceedings somewhat rowdy but I controlled with tact and firmness on resolution altering Programme of Non-Co-operation. Out of 4 Jilhas in Nagpur, all in favour. Therefore resolution carried, but I did not declare it so as to avoid a break-up on which rowdiness of Gandhi element was bent. On resolution relating to handing over of Berar to Nizam, Muslim element hostile. Clearly proving deceptive nature of present alliance with Muslims. Meal with all Delegates. Tea with Agarkar's son. Then Photo.

Monday, 5 December: Returned to Bombay at 7-30.

Kelkar's attitude at this Conference appeared to be unusually strange—"willing to wound but afraid to strike". On many occasions, this was obvious to us and it made him very weak in the Chair in holding the balance even between the contending parties. Later, when the Congress Press castigated us for our work at Akola, Kelkar, in justification of his attitude, wrote to Gandhi a letter from which I quote a relevant extract:

Before concluding I wish earnestly to repudiate the most unkind charge levelled against me and the Akola Conference. Personally I was a mere witness and nothing more than a Regulator of Debate. None of the propositions passed or rejected had my full concurrence, so far as their wording went. I was negotiating for a compromise amendment, but whatever one may say about the Conference at Akola, I want you to believe that the Conference having been decided upon in July or August last was held as mere matter of course, and it is cruel to say we joined the Conference because we thought it a good opportunity for airing our views as the ranks of leaders were being depleted owing to repression, or what is worse still, for saving our skin.

Dealing with this letter, Gandhi stated, in his usual way, that the criticism passed against the leaders who had gone to Akola was most undeserved, apparently in the light of Mr. Kelkar's explanatory letter, as regards which Gandhi made the following comment: "I heartily endorse every word of what Mr. Kelkar says". He added with grim humour: "It should be remembered that the letter was written when he [Kelkar] was just expecting to be imprisoned."

The speech which I delivered at Akola was more or less a repetition of my speech at Shahapur. In fact, the Akola Conference was held at the express desire of the followers of Tilak in the Central Provinces who insisted that they should have an opportunity of holding a Conference similar to that at Shahapur in their own Province. Consequently, the speech was on the same lines as the one I delivered at Shahapur. I added the following paragraph:

It is Gandhi's powerful and restraining influence that is keeping the national resentment in check, and if by any chance his influence wanes, either through the success of the Government's policy of repression or owing to any other causes, or if his salutary presence is removed by the powerful arm of the Law, many evil forces which are at present

held in check by him will be let loose. A cool and dispassionate view of the present unhappy situation would reveal to Government that safety lies in the early conciliation of the popular temper. But, instead of adopting such a wise and beneficent course, Government have elected to enrage the popular mind more and more by their repressive and provoking policy. Malabar, Dharwar, Matiar and Chandpur had been daily adding to the people's resentment. Some ray of hope dawned on the situation about the time H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught left our shores, which was more or less synchronous with the arrival of the new Viceroy. His liberal antecedents, his great reputation for truth and justice and his magnificent achievements in America had filled India for some time with hope. But with the passing of the period from April to July, the psychological moment, when the people would have cheerfully responded to a generous gesture of conciliation on his part has gone by. With every additional utterance he delivers, the expectations formed by some of us who had seen him in England in the hey-day of his power and popularity, have gradually disappeared and now we feel as if we stood on the brink of some terrible catastrophe, the precipitation of which appears to be prevented by the restraining hand of Mr. Gandhi alone.

On my speech and the proceedings at Akola, the following criticism appeared in the *Bombay Chronicle*, a paper devoted very loyally to Gandhi's programme.

The Joint Conference of the Delegates from the Provincial Congress Committees of the Marathi-speaking Provinces in India, which met at Akola and declared itself willing to depart in various directions from Mahatma Gandhi's policy, was remarkable in many ways.

Even the most casual student of the development of the Non-Co-operation Movement could not fail to recognize that there was an increasing tendency to stigmatize it as one which put up a premium on hypocrisy. The example of a political leader who really believes in all the items of the Gandhi Programme is rather rare. Away then with all this hypocrisy. Although we remain loyal to the Congress, we shall have the courage to make a public declaration that we want to alter its Programme.

The Akola Conference was looked upon by its organizers and participants as an example of such courage. It should also be mentioned here that among the most powerful advocates of an alteration in the Programme are found men who are equally keen advocates of the policy of remaining loyal to the Congress.

The agitation for revising the Gandhi Programme has now been looked upon as a matter of stern necessity. It is now an open secret that ever since the Calcutta Congress the immediate Lieutenants of Loka-

manya Tilak have not looked kindly upon the "Thou shall not" portions of the Gandhi Programme.

The Conference has thus succeeded in realizing the wishes of its organizers.

This view was nothing different from what was expected from the *Bombay Chronicle*. But its views were materially different from what Gandhi himself wrote in *Young India*:

Mr. Jayakar's address has been followed by a Conference of all Maharashtra at Akola. Mr. Jayakar is a thinker, he loves his country. He commands and deserves respectful attention. Those who gathered together at Akola are earnest, patriotic, seasoned soldiers. They are amongst the boldest and the most disciplined workers in the land and one has to pause and think when they dissent from a Programme.

Mr. Jayakar's address and the proceedings of the Akola Conference have made me think furiously. There is no difficulty about understanding and appreciating the suggested modifications. It is a Programme, if I may venture to say so, of unbelief. It is based upon the assumption that Swarajya is not attainable within a short time and that we must make such use as we can of the existing machinery with a view to improving it.

There is a fundamental distinction between the two processes. The one is aseptic and the other antiseptic. They are diametrically opposite. In the one, you rely upon the inherent purity of the system to destroy all poisonous germs that have entered the body and in the other you resort to outside applications, stronger poisons, to destroy the intruding germs. Both may be effective but they cannot be used at the same time. We definitely rejected the antiseptic treatment last year. The majority of Maharashtra frankly suggest a return.

My plea is for everyone to act according to his belief. The Congress provides the widest platform. Its creed is incredibly simple. A full-fledged co-operator as well as a nationalist who wants a change in the Programme can work in it. Let us not push the mandate theory to ridiculous extremes and become slaves of the majority. That would be a revival of brute force in a more virulent form.

There is room enough in our great country for as many parties as there are honest men. I would welcome an efficient and able organization containing men who believe in using Government institutions, and finding what warmth they can give them, even as I would have all organizations to extend toleration to those whole-hoggers who wish to cut off all possible connection with the Government. There is no reason why a Province which can carry the people with it should not organize itself even on either basis.

I plead, that is to say, for a truthful Programme and truthful Parties. Let people only work a Programme in which they believe implicitly.

Loyalty to human institutions has its well-defined limits. To be loyal to an organization must not mean subordination of one's settled convictions. Parties may fall and Parties may rise, but if we are to attain freedom, our deep convictions must remain unaffected by such passing changes.

Although I received severe castigation from persons and journals professing to follow Gandhi implicitly, I was very much encouraged to find that independent, fearless and frank journals supported my views substantially, not only as regards the four boycotts but also as regards the dropping of Civil Disobedience. The critics of my view endeavoured to cut at the root of my criticism by pointing out that the agitation was confined to the discontented followers of Tilak and was guided by a feeling of extreme loyalty to him, to the exclusion of Gandhi, which was no doubt a complete falsehood. The *Tribune's* view came as a great help to show that it was not only in Maharashtra but also in distant warlike Punjab that my views were favoured by a large number of thinking followers of Gandhi.

I had further the satisfaction of feeling that I had set on foot a critical examination of the conservative Non-Co-operation Programme, not only in Maharashtra but in other parts of the country and I felt certain that this process would continue unimpeded after it had once started. My satisfaction was greater on finding that my speeches had an effect even on Gandhi himself, although his followers were not capable of practising the toleration which that great leader himself exhibited towards those who, like me, differed from him. The full effect of my utterances was felt when, later, several changes took place in the conservative Programme of Non-Co-operation and ultimately resulted in the dropping of Civil Disobedience and accepting Council Entry as an important weapon in carrying out the fight with the Government on that front. But this is a story which will be narrated in later chapters.

On 5 December I returned to Bombay after finishing the Akola Conference and on 11 December C. R. Das was arrested. This was most unfortunate and his absence at this critical time was disastrous in relation to many important events which followed at Ahmedabad towards the end of this month. Between 5 and 22 December I kept myself busy in delivering

speeches in different places asking the people to remain quiet in spite of the riots in Bombay. Rumours were then current in Bombay that my arrest was very likely, though personally I did not credit them, but it had the effect of lending temporary importance to the views which I propounded.

On 22 December I left for Ahmedabad to attend the Congress Session there. As Gandhi had said in his article quoted above, this Session of the Congress was most important because of the possibility of a modification of the conservative Non-Co-operation Programme by a fairly large vote. So a large contingent from Bombay left for Ahmedabad. The material entries in my diary belonging to this visit are as follows:

Friday, 23 December 1921: Arrived in Ahmedabad at 8-30 in the morning. Put up with a friend at Bhadra, the Mahratta quarter. Called on Gandhi after breakfast. Sat working with him on Draft Resolutions till late. It was a pleasure to work on them in close co-operation with Gandhi and I could see that my speeches at Akola and Shahapur had made no difference in his confidence and cordiality towards me.

Saturday, 24 December: At Ahmedabad.

Meeting All-India Congress Committee. I attended. Non-controversial Resolutions gone through. Non-Co-operation Resolution put off till tomorrow. Conference I had suggested took place between Gandhi and Maharashtra Party and he adpted modifications which I had accepted but my Maharashtrian friends had not.

He spoke of giving Provincial Autonomy to the different parts of the country as regards the practice of his Programme. It was indeed very tolerant of him to do so. A great triumph for us, I was full of admiration at the way he conducted himself and ended by promising to make an appreciative statement the next day.

Sunday, 25 December: At Ahmedabad.

Subjects Committee in morning. Gandhi made a firm speech but very conciliatory in tone explaining with sympathy the attitude of the Maharashtra Party.

Monday, 26 December: Gandhiji's day of silence. No work done.

Tuesday, 27 December: At Ahmedabad.

Opening day of Congress. So enthusiastic but disappointing in the end. The squatting arrangements impressive in fine white Khadi. Patel's speech short. So also the other speeches.

Atmosphere against speeches. No clapping. Grim determination. Saw Jinnah and Malaviya and discussed proposal about Resolution of Congress in reply to Viceroy's speech. Both favourable to Round Table Conference.

At night a Conference till 1-45 a.m. between Gandhi and myself

in the presence of a small gathering.

Malaviya and Jinnah's proposals of Round Table Conference smashed by Gandhi. I felt it should have been put before Gandhi with greater tact.

Wednesday, 28 December: Busy at Ahmedabad.

Breakfast with Ambalal Sarabhai at Shahi Baug. A cosmopolitan gathering. Fine house. Conference with Madras friends about issuing a Manifesto.

Attended Congress. Then went to Muslim Nagar.

Left Ahmedabad at night.

Friday, 30 December: Madras friends at tea in my house at Bombay.

S. Srinivas Iyengar, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, Rangaswami Iyengar and Satyamurti. Srinivas Iyengar strongly pressing me to start a new Party to advocate the changes I had suggested.

The Congress Week was a period of joy and celebration. There was confidence and hope written in every face. The Reception Committee had provided accommodation for one hundred thousand visitors to the Congress, but the lowest calculation put the actual figure at two lakhs. This was in spite of the imprisonment of leaders and workers whose courage had filled the people with a new hope and a new joy. There was a serious business air about the Subjects Committee which had ample time for deliberation. Hakim Ajmal Khan made an ideal and patient President in the place of Das who was in jail. Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the Reception Committee took not more than fifteen minutes to read his Address in Hindi. The usual speeches to induct the President had been dropped. That saved two hours. The President's Address took no more than twenty minutes. Every speech was to the point and not a minute was allowed to be wasted in idle talk. The resolutions were addressed to the nation. They presented a Programme of earnest work that had got to be done if the nation was to find her place in the world. Great care had, therefore, been taken in the Subjects Committee to see that the resolutions were clear and capable of being properly understood before they were voted upon.

The musical concerts, in which musicians from all parts of India took part, was an irresistible attraction for thousands of spectators, ending in the evening with Vishnu Digambar's singing. The concerts were held with a view to popularizing music in National Assemblies and organizing Bhajan Mandals.

The President's Address was translated into English. Val-

labhbhai Patel in his Address as Chairman of the Reception Committee observed as follows:

Never before has the Congress met under auspices such as God has provided for us this year. We seem to be pulsating with joy when we might have been grieving over the separation of our loved and revered workers. We recognize that great and learned Muslims and Hindus are now having their well-earned rest in the Government jails, because they have served and suffered for us and earned the reward coveted by us. We had hoped that we could meet to celebrate the establishment of Swarajya and therefore endeavoured to arrange a Reception befitting such an occasion. But though we do not meet to celebrate that happy event, God, in His abundant mercy, has sent us suffering to try us and make us worthy of so precious a gift and therefore we see round us approaching signs of Swarajya as a balm to the wounds inflicted upon our brothers.

Ahmedabad has a problem to solve and it can only be solved by Civil Disobedience in the last resort. The Tehsils of Bardoli and Anand are making elaborate preparation for mass Civil-Disobedience... At the same time, it is necessary to assure you that we shall do nothing reckless, nothing that we as peaceful and peace-loving human beings may not do for the preservation of the national self-respect or for safeguarding our national rights. Though Deshbandhu Das is not in our midst in the body, his pure, patriotic and self-sacrificing spirit is with us. He has sent an inspiring address full of religious fervour. In the absence of Deshbandhu Das, the All-India Congress Committee has elected, in his place, Hakim Ajmal Khan, who commands the confidence and affection of Hindus and Muslims alike.

The message sent by Das was as follows:

The only method of warfare which is open to us is Non-Co-operation. That is the Programme which we adopted at the two successive Congresses. We are devoted to the doctrine and you do not require me to discuss with you its ethics. What is Non-Co-operation? "It is the refusal to be party to preventable evil. It is refusal to accept or have injustice. It is refusal to acquiesce in wrongs that can be righted or to submit to a state of affairs which is manifestly inconsistent with the dictates of righteousness and, as a consequence, it is a refusal to work with those, on grounds of interest or expediency, who insist on committing or perpetuating a wrong."

But it is argued that the whole doctrine of Non-Co-operation is a doctrine of negation. I agree that the doctrine is a doctrine of negation, but I maintain that, in substance, it is one of affirmation. We reject in order to accept. It is the whole history of human endeavours. If subjection is an evil, then we are bound to non-co-operate with every

agency that seeks to perpetuate our subjection. That is a negation but it affirms our determination to be free to win our liberty at any cost. Nor do I agree that the doctrine is one of despair. It is the doctrine of hope and confidence with unbounded faith in its own efficacy.

Das's wife, Basanti Devi, also sent a message:

Let every man and woman of India ask himself or herself today this one supreme question: "Do I stand for India in her present struggle?" Let us search our hearts and directly answer it now or never. We must decide and the responsibility for the decision is ours. The country demands stern and resolute action. If we feel in our heart of hearts that we stand for India in her struggle then we must act, act, act, we ask for no more; we expect no less. Let all our normal activities be suspended until the struggle in the present form is finished.

Das's Address, with a prefatory note by Gandhi, was published in *Young India* of 12 January 1922. Gandhi's note was as follows:

I must apologize to the public for the delay in issuing Deshbandhu Das's Presidential Address. It was received by me in a fragmentary condition, with instructions to revise it and put it into shape. The reader would be glad to learn that beyond restoring one sentence which had been ruled out and adding to it a complete thought and beyond slight verbal immaterial alterations the Address has been printed as received. In appreciating the Address the reader will be helped to know that it was prepared just before his arrest. The reader will not fail to mark the self-restraint with which the Address is prepared as also the fact that the Deshbandhu believes in non-violence as his final creed. That the only use the Government has for such a man is to put him in prison is about the greatest condemnation it can pronounce upon itself.

Das's Address elaborated the following points:

We have arrived at a critical stage in our struggle with the bureaucracy and it behoves every one of us to search our hearts and to ask ourselves the question: "Do I stand for India in her present struggle? What is our aim? Whither are we going? I think that most people will agree that we are out to secure freedom, freedom from foreign subjection, freedom from foreign interference. What is meant by the word freedom. It does not imply absence of all restraint or absence of the idea of dependence. We may describe freedom

as that stage, that condition, which makes it possible for a nation to realize its own individuality and to evolve its own destiny.

But here a voice interrupts, the voice of Rabindranath, the Poet of India. It says:

"Western culture is standing at our door. Must we be so inhospitable as to turn it away, or ought we not acknowledge that in the union of the cultures of the East and the West is the salvation of the world?"

To this I reply: I admit that if Indian nationalism has to live, it cannot afford to isolate itself from other nations. But I have two observations to make on the criticism of Rabindranath; first, we must have a house of our own before we can receive a guest; and secondly, Indian culture must discover itself before it can be ready to assimilate western culture. In my opinion, there can be no true assimilation before freedom comes; although there may be, as there has been, a slavish imitation. The cultural conquest of India is all but complete; it was the inevitable result of her political conquest. India must resist it. She must vibrate with national life and then we may talk of the union of the two civilizations.

Does the scheme of the Reforms Act secure even the elementary rights which every citizen under any civilized Government possesses? Is repressive legislation possible except with the consent of the people? Does it give the right to the people to repeal repressive legislation which disgraces the Statute Book in India? Has the repetition of Punjab atrocities been made impossible? "I think I am right in saying that in regard to all these matters the position is exactly the same as it was before the Reforms Act. So long as the Preamble to the Government of India Act stands and our inherent right to regulate our own affairs, develop our own individuality and evolve our own destinies, is not recognized, I must decline to consider any terms of peace. The only method, therefore, of warfare open to us is Non-Co-operation and that is the Programme which we adopted at two successive Congresses.

Nationalism is not an aggressive assertion of individuality, distinct and separate from the other nations. It is a yearning for self-fulfilment, self-determination and self-realization, as a part of the scheme of universal humanity by which alone humanity can fulfil itself, determine itself and realize itself.

Non-Co-operation again does not reject western culture because it is western, but it recognizes that there must be rejection in order that there may be wholehearted acceptance. It requires no wisdom to see that if every one of us withdraws our helping hand from the machine that is relentlessly working to prevent our growth and self-realization as a nation, the machine must, of necessity, stop its work. We are told, however, that once the machine of Government stops its work, we shall be swept away by the forces of disorder and reaction.... There have

been, I admit, disturbances in Bombay in the course of our propaganda. We must accept responsibility for such disturbances and frankly admit that to the extent to which there has been violence, intimidation and coercion, we may be said to have failed. But what is the remedy? Surely not to abjure our faith but to see that the faith is properly understood. Bloodshed and disorder have been associated with every great movement that has taken place—the spread of Christianity, for instance. But is it to be argued, that because, in the spread of a New Idea, there is danger of disorder and disturbance as it comes into conflict with old ideals and the old view of life, missionaries must of necessity stay their hand and decline to carry the light they feel. Such an argument is not worth a moment's consideration. The success of our movement has made a deep impression on the bureaucracy, if we may judge by the repressive policy which it has initiated and is carrying into effect.

In the end, the speech referred to the visit of the Prince of Wales and controverted the notion that his visit was a success in Calcutta.

I would respectfully lay before His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales our wishes of goodwill to him personally. There is no quarrel between us and the Royal House of England; but he comes here as the ambassador of a Power with whom we have decided not to co-operate; as such, we cannot receive him. Also we are in no mood to take part in any rejoicing.... It would be sheer hypocrisy on our part to extend a national welcome to the ambassador of the Power that would deny us our elementary rights.

The main Resolution which Gandhi moved later was as follows:

Whereas, since the holding of the last National Congress, the people of India have found from actual experience that, by reason of the adoption of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation, the country has made great advance in fearlessness, self-sacrifice and self-respect, and *whereas*, the Movement has greatly damaged the prestige of the Government and *whereas*, the country on the whole is rapidly progressing towards Swarajya, *this Congress confirms the resolution* adopted at the special Session of the Congress at Calcutta and reaffirmed at Nagpur and places on record the fixed determination of the Congress to continue the Programme of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation with greater vigour than hitherto in such manner as each Province may determine, till the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed and Swarajya is established, and the control of the Government of India passes into the hands of the

people from that of an irresponsible Corporation and *whereas*, by reason of the threat uttered by His Excellency the Viceroy in his recent speeches and the consequent repression started by the Government of India in the various Provinces by way of disbandment of Volunteer Corps and forcible prohibition of public and even Committee Meetings in an illegal and high-handed manner and by the arrest of many Congress workers in several Provinces and *whereas* this repression is manifestly intended to stifle all Congress and Khilafat activities and deprive the public of their assistance, *this Congress resolves* that all activities of the Congress be suspended as far as necessary and *appeals* to all, quietly and without any demonstration, to offer themselves for arrest by belonging to the Volunteer Organizations to be formed throughout the country, in terms of the resolution of the Working Committee arrived at in Bombay on the 23rd of November last, provided that no-one shall be accepted as Volunteer who does not sign the following pledge:

- (1) I wish to be a member of the National Volunteer Corps.
- (2) So long as I remain a member of the Corps, I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that, as India is circumstanced, non-violence can alone help the Khilafat and the Punjab and result in the attainment of Swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Musalman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.
- (3) I believe in and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.
- (4) I believe in Swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation, and shall use hand-spun, hand-woven Khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth.
- (5) As a Hindu, I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall, on all possible occasions, seek personal contact with and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.
- (6) I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all the regulations, not inconsistent with the spirit of this pledge, prescribed by the Volunteer Board or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.
- (7) I am prepared to suffer imprisonment, assault or even death for the sake of my religion and my country, without resentment.
- (8) In the event of my imprisonment I shall not claim from the Congress any support for my family or dependants.

This Congress trusts that every person of the age of 18 and over will immediately join the Volunteer organizations.

Notwithstanding the proclamations prohibiting public meetings, and inasmuch as even Committee meetings have been attempted to be con-

strued as public meetings, this Congress advises the holding of Committee meetings and of public meetings, the latter in enclosed places and by tickets and by previous announcements, at which as far as possible only speakers previously announced shall deliver written speeches, care being taken in every case to avoid risk of provocation and possible violence by the public in consequence.

This Congress is further of opinion that Civil Disobedience is the only civilized and effective substitute for an armed rebellion, whenever every other remedy for preventing arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority by individuals or corporations has been tried, and therefore, advises all Congress workers and others, who believe in peaceful methods and are convinced that there is no remedy save some kind of sacrifice to dislodge the existing Government from its position of perfect irresponsibility to the people of India, to organize Individual Civil Disobedience and Mass Civil Disobedience, when the mass of people have been sufficiently trained in the methods of non-violence or otherwise, in terms of the resolution thereon of the last meeting of the All India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

This Congress is of opinion that in order to concentrate attention upon Civil Disobedience, whether mass or individual, whether of an offensive or defensive character, under proper safeguards and under instructions to be issued from time to time by the Working Committee or the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, all other Congress activities should be suspended whenever and wherever and to the extent to which it may be found necessary.

This Congress calls upon all students of the age of 18 and over, particularly those studying in National Institutions and the staff thereof, immediately to sign the foregoing pledge and become members of the National Volunteer Corps. In view of the impending arrest of a large number of Congress workers, this Congress, whilst requiring the ordinary machinery to remain intact and to be utilised in the ordinary manner whenever feasible, hereby appoints, until further instructions, Mahatma Gandhi as the sole Executive Authority of the Congress and invests him with the full powers of the All India Congress Committee, including the power to convene a special session of the Congress or of the All India Congress Committee or the Working Committee, such power to be exercised between any two sessions of the All India Congress Committee and also with the power to appoint a successor in emergency.

This Congress hereby confers upon the successor and all subsequent successors appointed in turn by their predecessors all his aforesaid powers.

Provided that nothing in this resolution shall be deemed to authorise Mahatma Gandhi or any of the aforesaid successors to conclude any terms of peace with the Government of India or the British Government without the previous sanction of the All India Congress Com-

mittee, to be finally ratified by the Congress specially convened for the purpose and provided also that the present creed of the Congress shall in no case be altered by Mahatma Gandhi or his successors, except with the leave of the Congress first obtained.

This Congress congratulates all those patriots who are now undergoing imprisonment for the sake of their conscience or country and realizes that their sacrifice has considerably hastened the advent of Swaraj.

Having finished reading the resolution, Gandhi said:

There is absolutely nothing new in this resolution that we have not been doing all this time, that we have not been thinking all this time. There is absolutely nothing new in this resolution which is at all startling. Those of you, who have followed the proceedings from month to month of the Working Committee, or of the All India Congress Committee every three months, and have studied their resolution, can but come to one conclusion that this resolution is absolutely the natural result of the national activities during the past 15 months; and if you have at all followed the course, the downward course, that the repressive policy of the Government has been taking, you can only come to the conclusion that the Subjects Committee has rightly come to this resolution and that the only answer that a self-respecting Nation can return to the Viceregal pronouncements and to the repression that is overtaking this land, is the course mapped out in this resolution.

The Resolution also says, in all humility, to the Government, "No matter what you do, no matter how you repress us, we shall one day wring reluctant repentance from you, and we ask you to think betimes, and take care what you are doing and see that you do not make 300 millions of India your eternal enemies." If Lord Reading has really come to India to do justice and nothing else—and we want nothing more—then I inform him, from this platform with God as my witness, with all the earnestness I can command, that he has got an open door in this resolution.

There is every chance for him to hold a Round Table Conference, but it must be a real Conference, if he wants a conference at a table where only equals are to sit and where there is not to be a single beggar, then there is an open door and that door will always remain open. There is nothing in this resolution which anyone, who has modesty and humility, need be ashamed of. This resolution is not an arrogant challenge to anybody but it is a challenge to authority that is enthroned on arrogance.... It is an humble and irrevocable challenge to authority, which, in order to save itself, wants to crush freedom of opinion and freedom of association—the two lungs that are absolutely necessary for a man to breathe the oxygen of liberty. And if there is any authority in this country that wants to crush the freedom of

speech and freedom of association, I want to be able to say, in your name, from this platform, that that authority will perish unless it repents.

I am a man of peace, I believe in peace, but I do not want peace that you find in stones. I do not want the peace that you find in the grave; but I do want that peace which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of the whole world but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God

Gandhi's speech was followed by a speech by Vithalbhai Patel, the main part of which was an address to the Government as follows:

With a full sense of all my responsibility, as speaking from this platform, I ask the Government to point out their differences with us. We demand freedom, Swaraj. You have declared through your Parliament that you intend to grant us Swaraj. The King in his message through the Duke of Connaught has accepted the word "Swaraj". What then are our differences? The only difference is that you never keep the promises you make. We have not the least confidence in you. You have not kept any of the promises you made. You have substantially violated all the pledges given by you from the time of Queen Victoria to date. If you are honest, pray grant Swaraj.

An important Muslim Divine, Maulana Abdul Majid from the United Provinces, gave his support in a speech which reinforced the sentiments of the previous speaker. He was followed by another Muslim Divine, Maulana Syed Mahomed Faki. After a couple of women had spoken, giving support to the resolution, the Shankaracharya of the Sharada Peeth, who had at this time been taking great interest in the political events in the country, also addressed the Congress. He was followed by Sikh leaders. Thereafter the President put the resolution to the vote as a whole and it was carried by an overwhelming majority, only 10 people voting against.

Then came resolution No. 2, regarded as of considerable importance, as holding out an olive branch to those holding contrary opinions as regards the programme of full non-co-operation. The substance of this resolution was that

The Congress appeals to all such people who do not believe in full non-co-operation or in the principle of non-co-operation, but who consider it essential for the sake of national self-respect to demand and insist upon the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, and,

for the sake of full national self-expression, to insist upon the immediate establishment of Swaraj, to render full assistance to the nation in the promotion of unity between different religious communities, to popularise carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving from its economical aspect and as a cottage industry, necessary in order to supplement the resources of millions of agriculturists who are living on the brink of starvation, and, to that end, preach and practise the use of handspun and handwoven garments, to help the cause of total prohibition and if Hindus, to bring about the removal of untouchability and to help the improvement of the conditions of the sub-merged classes. This resolution was moved from the Chair and carried.

The next important resolution was No. 4. by which the Congress congratulated Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Turks upon their successes and assured the Turkish Nation of India's sympathy and support in its struggle to retain its status and independence.

Then came resolution No. 5 which, though moved from the Chair, had its own importance.

This Congress deplores the occurrences that took place in Bombay on 7th November last and after and assures all parties and communities that it has been and is the desire and determination of the Congress to guard their rights to the fullest extent.

We had been hearing rumours of very warm controversial talks between Gandhi on the one hand and some extreme thinkers led by Hazrat Mohani on the other. Picking out a sentence here and there from Gandhi's previous speeches at the Nagpur and Calcutta Congresses and believing that he was, by moving a resolution at the current session of the Congress, helping Gandhi and his supporters by stating explicitly what he thought was implicit in Gandhi's previous utterances, Hazrat Mohani moved the following resolution:

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swaraj or complete Independence, free from all foreign control by the people of India, by all legitimate and peaceful means.

On comparing the explicit words of this resolution with some of the previous utterances of Gandhi and his supporters, his charge was made good that he was only stating in clear terms what had always been understood as lying at the back of the Congress leaders' utterances. But, somehow or other, it provoked a great controversy between him and Gandhi, the

significance or the rationality of which many persons in the audience were unable to appreciate. Hazrat Mohani's speech contained the following observations:

The resolution means that up to now, by virtue of the Article relating to the Creed of the Congress, the goal of India, of the Indian National Congress, is merely to attain Swaraj. But the word "Swaraj" is not defined. Now I move this resolution that by "Swaraj" we mean "Complete Independence". Before inviting you to accept the resolution, I request you to turn to the events of the past year. You will remember that when the resolution about the creed was moved at the Nagpur Congress and the word "Swaraj" was inserted in it, it was said that that word was left undefined so that it might be open to the people to attach to it any meaning they liked; that those who desired to interpret "Swaraj" as "within the British Empire" as well as those interpreting it as "without" might continue to remain in the Congress fold. Mahatma Gandhi had said that if the Khilafat and the Punjab questions were settled according to our wishes, we would not attempt to go out of the Empire, but if the settlement was not satisfactory, our efforts would be directed for Swaraj "without" the British Empire. When that condition has not been fulfilled, when the Punjab and the Khilafat questions have not been settled within a year, why should we not be able to say today, after one year according to our word, that "Swaraj" means "Complete Independence".

In this strain Hazrat Mohani went on justifying his resolution and avoiding all expressions likely to create greater disagreement between his and Gandhi's view.

There were many in the audience who realised that a little more amicable dealing with Hazrat Mohani's view would have avoided the open breach which manifested itself in that Congress session at an inopportune moment. Mohani stated, with considerable conviction, that

Individually, every one has been asserting Independence for the country. If all those present here be individually and separately asked to give their opinion, every one of them would say that he is free. Then why would we not collectively declare that we are free from today and completely free. We have kept to our hearts the words of Lokamanya Tilak that, "Liberty is our birthright and it is our duty to attain it."

Listening to this last argument, some of us from Maharashtra felt that Mohani had introduced needless provocation by a reference to Tilak and his sentiments. Mohani's speech

was supported by many Muslim Divines and the atmosphere created was such that Gandhi thought it necessary to proceed to the rostrum, amid cries of *Vande Mataram* and *Allaho Akbar* to oppose Mohani's motion. It was one of the strongest and most impassioned speeches of Gandhi I heard, as if the whole super-structure of non-co-operation, which he had built upon his own ideas, was threatened with destruction. We felt that it was not necessary to take such an exaggerated view of Mohani's speech. What he demanded was perhaps a little in advance of what Gandhi was prepared to concede at that stage of our agitation.

Gandhi observed:

All I want to say to you is that the levity with which the proposition has been taken by some of you has grieved me because it shows a lack of responsibility. As responsible men and women, we should go back to the days of Nagpur and Calcutta and we should remember what we did only an hour ago. An hour ago, we passed a resolution which actually contemplates a final settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and transference of the power from the hands of the Bureaucracy into the hands of the people by certain definite means. Who is here who can tell me that the Parsis and the Sikhs and the Christians and the Jews and the Untouchables, about whom you heard this afternoon—who will tell me that those very people will not rise against any such idea? Think, therefore, fifty times before you take a step which will redound not to your credit, not to your advantage, but which may cause you irreparable injury. Are creeds such simple things like clothes which a man can change at will? For creeds people die and for creeds people live from age to age. Are you going to change the Creed which, with all deliberation and after great debate in Nagpur, you accepted? There was no limitation of one year when you accepted that Creed. It is an extensive Creed; it takes in all, the weakest and the strongest, and you will deny yourselves the privilege of clothing the weakest amongst yourselves with protection if you accept this limited Creed of Maulana Hazrat Mohani which does not admit the weakest of your brethren. I, therefore, ask you in all confidence to reject his proposition.

Mohani replied in a short speech:

The strongest of all arguments urged by Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech is that we must correctly measure our strength and now that the views of the other parties in the country are approximating to ours, it behoves us to so adjust our demands as to enable us to carry with us all shades of opinion. But this consideration has

nothing to do with the question at issue. What we want is that we should have "Complete Independence" as our ideal, and we should realise that we can have no rest until we get it. By having "Complete Independence" as our ideal, it does not follow that we shall refuse to accept anything less than that. By all means it will continue to be our ideal. There is no reason why we should refuse to accept anything less than what we aim at. Last year it was declared at Nagpur that if the Khilafat and the Punjab questions were settled, Swaraj would be within and not without the British Empire. It was also said at that time that the question would be settled within a year. Now that one year has passed, why not decide this? If it is not so decided, what guarantee is there that we would ever decide it? Swaraj is such a vague term that the Government itself, recognising its vagueness, has begun to use the word Swaraj. Does that not mean that the word Swaraj is capable of even the interpretation put upon it in the Government official documents? The Swaraj of the Government does not mean anything else than placing a few earthen toys before us. You may be told to have Provincial Autonomy. The entire world is sought to be deceived by saying that the Indians are crying for nothing as they have already obtained Swaraj. The Reforms that have been given to them are Swaraj. The Government would say that. I would, therefore, request you to interpret Swaraj in its true sense and not as Government would have it. So long as you do not define the word, every one is at liberty to import his meaning into it. I am at a loss to understand the reason why we should not at once collectively declare our ideal and try for its realisation with all our might when our great leaders, now in jail, have, every one of them, said that they owed no allegiance to this Government, or to its Courts or to its laws. Kingdoms are built in this way only. An idea strikes a great mind; that idea is then translated into action and spreads over the whole world. Can you point to a single instance where any great deed is achieved without the goal having been first defined? Just think over what Lokamanya Tilak had said, "Swaraj is our birth-right." Does anyone imagine that Lokamanya Tilak meant thereby only a few reforms? Our spirituality and high imagination demand that we prove to the world that we are not so weak-brained as to accept the word "Swaraj" in such a limited sense. I, therefore, request you to define your goal, irrespective of what Mahatma Gandhi has said. This is the time for it, and you should know that, if we do not declare our ideal today, we will suffer in the estimation of the world. For, it has been declared throughout the whole world that we would attain freedom in this year. Do you desire to falsify Mahatma Gandhi's word? Will Swaraj drop from heaven? I say Swaraj is not in any other hands but our own. We ourselves can take Swaraj. When Mahatma Gandhi talked of Swaraj in a year, he also thought that we would declare freedom whenever we liked.

This closely reasoned speech had one defect, as I said above, that it relied upon Lokamanya Tilak's famous dictum, "Swaraj is our birthright", and whatever the effect of a reliance on such a dictum might have been at any other time, it had a contrary effect to that intended upon the audience, as setting up an inopportune conflict between what Tilak had said and what was Gandhi saying.

The fate of the resolution was quite obvious to everyone. Votes were taken. The resolution was rejected by an overwhelming majority amidst cries of "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai". After a few formal resolutions, the President declared the session closed. Thus ended the Congress session at Ahmedabad.

My views about the unreasoning antipathy of Gandhi and his followers to the motion of Hazrat Mohani happened, curiously enough, to be in accord with the opinion expressed by one of Gandhi's admiring chroniclers, who observed as follows:

At this distance of time, one is apt to look upon it [Mohani's motion] as the most natural sequence of all that had happened, and may even wonder why it should have been resisted at all by the Congress or by Gandhi.

The chronicler then offers the following justification for Gandhi's attitude:

The language employed by Gandhi may strike us now, as we read it, as strong, but strong it was meant to be. Was it also too strong, is the question. Gandhi had evolved a new movement, shaped a new creed and planned a new attack. It was a perfect campaign, in which the objective and the strategy were all clearly defined. The troops were in the midst of skirmishes and engagements. A huge battle was about to take place. Just then, for a soldier to come up to the General and the army and say that the objective should be re-defined was to disturb the forces arranged for battle. There was no doubt that the time chosen was utterly inopportune and the spirit displayed unhelpful. No wonder, then, if the General was distressed or even became indignant. But some of the arguments employed by Gandhi on this occasion sound very much, it was pointed out at the time, *mutatis mutandis*, like the arguments of the opponents of the existing Creed at the time of its evolution at Nagpur.

The argument, however, that appealed was "Let us first of all gather up our strength, and let us first of all sound our own depths. Let

us not go into waters whose depths we do not know," and this proposition of Hazrat Mohani leads you into depths unfathomable. This argument was clinching. A general cannot take an army into depths unfathomable to himself. And the proposition was thrown out, and to anticipate events, was pressed year after year until it was accepted as a resolution of the Congress in 1927 in Madras and was embodied in the Creed itself in 1929 at Lahore.

This is the best justification offered, as stated above, by one of Gandhi's admiring chroniclers. How far it justifies Gandhi's opposition to Mohani's motion at Ahmedabad the readers will judge themselves.

The following important features of the Ahmedabad Congress noticed by the said Chronicler might prove interesting even at this date.

(a) "Swaraj inside a year" was the thought uppermost in every man's mind. Gandhi had promised Swaraj inside a year, if his programme was adhered to and carried out. The year was about to close and everybody was looking up to the political firmament to see some miracle bringing Swaraj down to his feet. But everyone was prepared to do his best, to suffer his worst in order to "hasten the advent of that [no longer] far-off Divine event." No sacrifice would be too much for popular endurance. Everyone was anxious to have a programme of Mass Civil Disobedience. Over 20,000 individual civil resisters were already in jail. Their numbers were soon to swell to 30,000. But Mass Disobedience was the thing that was luring the people. What was it, what would it be? Gandhi himself never defined it, never elaborated it, never visualised it even to himself. It must unfold itself to a discerning vision, to a pure heart, from step to step, it must, as the path-way in a dense forest would, reveal itself to a wayfarer's feet as he wends his weary way until a ray of light brightens the hopes of an all but despairing wanderer. Mass Disobedience was to be undertaken by competent men in a suitable area with strict regard to conditions laid down in that behalf without haste and without rest. So Gandhi wanted to organize a No-tax campaign in Gujerat, but friends in Guntur had already been preparing the district for a No-tax campaign with equal warmth, enthusiasm and preparedness for sacrifice and suffering. The state of the country at the time as well as the duty of the Congress were aptly described in the opening paragraph of the main resolution of the Ahmedabad Session [quoted above]. Fear had been cast off by the people. A sense of self-respect developed in the Nation. Congressmen realized that service and self-sacrifice were the only means of winning public confidence. The prestige too of Government was

materially shaken, and people had received good lessons regarding the ideology of Swaraj.

(b) Gandhi had asked the Rev. C. F. Andrews to be present at the Ahmedabad session in order to give a religious message. He consented to do so but he explained first of all to Gandhi that he was opposed to the burning of foreign cloth, because he feared that it would inculcate violence. Contrary to his usual custom, Andrews appeared in European dress, in order to make clear his opposition to the policy of burning. In his address, he explained why he was not wearing Khaddar on that occasion. It is noteworthy that he was received with the utmost respect and affection by the audience, though they could not be expected to agree with his opinion on the point at issue.

(c) The prominent part played by the Muslim Divines in advising the Congress on political matters that came up before it. Regarding the conditions of individual and Mass Civil Disobedience, there was considerable discussion over the question of non-violence,—whether it should be in thought, word and deed. It will be remembered that the Calcutta resolution included “word and deed” only. The Muslims objected to the addition of the word “thought” in the Volunteers’ pledge as opposed to the Shariat and, therefore, “intent” was substituted for the word “thought”. In all these matters the Ulemas played a notable part in interpreting political ideas in the light of *Al Quoran*, the *Shariat* and the *Hadis*. We shall see later on that their aid was invoked on matters of Council entry as well, and the conduct of affairs thereafter.

It may however be noted that, at that time, with regard to this feature, noticed by the Congress chronicler, there were serious differences of opinion even amongst Congressmen whether the advent of considerations urged by the Muslim divines out of deference to their religious books mentioned above was a desirable element in the political evolution of the country.

(d) A new departure took place at the Ahmedabad session which deserves to be noted. The delegates were not willing to disperse soon after the conclusion of the sittings. Gandhi walked up to each Camp and explained the technique of Civil Disobedience. In the Andhra Camp he took pains to point out how, in any area where a No-tax campaign was contemplated, volunteers must go about the villages and take the signatures of the ryots agreeing to the campaign. This was of course to be done in addition to the enforcement of the conditions of Mass and Individual Civil Disobedience.

More details than usual of the Ahmedabad Congress proceedings have been given in this narrative to show that, in the history of the Indian Non-Co-operation and in the opinion of its votaries, the Ahmedabad Congress had always been regarded as a signal mark of the complete triumph at this date of Gandhi's views, surmounting all opposition.

CHAPTER EIGHT

After Ahmedabad Congress to Report of Civil Disobedience Committee

(Dec. 1921 to Oct. 1922)

A N IMPORTANT incident which happened at the Ahmedabad Congress was that, owing to the efforts of Sapru, who, at this time, was the Law Member in Lord Reading's Government, and also owing to the active efforts of Malaviyaji, an offer was received at Ahmedabad through Hridayanath Kunzru and Jamnadas Dwarkadas. They were sent at the instance of the Viceroy, Sapru and Mrs. Besant, to Gandhi at Ahmedabad on 18 December 1921, with the offer that, if the agitation boycotting the visit of the Prince was stopped, the Viceroy would call a Round Table Conference in Calcutta a week prior to the Prince's visit there, at which, he himself would represent the British Government and India would be represented by its political leaders, including Gandhi and his Congress friends. The Viceroy further promised that at this Conference, he would, on behalf of the British Government, offer full Provincial Autonomy and discussions would take place as to what powers could be transferred in the Central Government to the Indian people's representatives. In other words, in addition to full Provincial Autonomy, dyarchy in the Central Government would be negotiated.

When this message was conveyed to Gandhi at Ahmedabad, both Jinnah and myself were sitting very near him. Over this offer Gandhi remained silent in deep thought but some of his inflated supporters came out with the comment that the Viceroy must come to Ahmedabad personally to make this offer and to treat with Gandhi, instead of sending it through

emissaries not accredited to the Congress. Jinnah and myself exchanged glances at such a reception of the Viceroy's offer but Gandhi remained silent. We pressed him to explore this offer for, we thought, that in it lay germs which might be utilised for further development and the opportunity should not be ignored as it was obviously due to the Viceroy's anxiety to stop the boycott of the Prince of Wales' visit when the Prince was in Calcutta, during the Christmas festival. Gandhi listened with great attention but we felt doubtful whether he too shared the complacent views of some of his followers, who had come to convince themselves that the Government had been defeated and Swaraj was already in their hands. Gandhi, however, agreed to convey through the emissaries his acceptance of the offer, obviously with the view of exploring it. He was later engaged in deep consultations with his followers and Moulvis, at which we were not present, but it was clear that these followers did not like the idea of Gandhi accepting the Viceroy's offer and going to the Round Table Conference. Within one hour, Gandhi wired to Sapru and the Viceroy that, after serious thought, he had decided to reject the Viceroy's offer and the previous acceptance he had sent through Jamnadas and Kunzru was to be treated as cancelled.

It would be material in this connection, to reveal the efforts of Malaviyaji and Sapru, supported by Das, and Abul Kalam Azad, both then in jail, and the following telegrams will be found interesting. I am giving numbers to these telegrams because they will have to be frequently referred to in the narrative which follows:

No. 1: Telegram to Gandhi from Malaviya

Benares, 16th December, 1921

I am arranging deputation of about seven, to Viceroy on twenty-first to press upon him necessity of Round Table Conference. Hence going to Calcutta. Jamnadas and Kunzru reach Sabarmati tomorrow to explain situation. Desire to have your authority to say that, if Conference is accepted and Government stay hands and release leaders, you will withdraw opposition to Prince's welcome and suspend Civil Disobedience till termination Conference.

Malaviya

No. 2: Gandhi's reply to Malaviya

Sabarmati, 19th December, 1921

Saw Jamnadas and Kunzru. Please do not worry over repression. Conference will be abortive, unless Government truly penitent anxious to settle three things (Punjab, Khilafat and Swaraj).

Gandhi

No. 3: To Gandhi from Das and Abul Kalam Azad (Clear line telegram)

Calcutta, 19th December, 1921

We recommend calling off Hartal on following conditions:

- 1) Government calling a Conference which shall soon consider all questions raised by Congress.
- 2) Withdrawal of recent Government Communique and Police Magisterial orders.
- 3) Releasing all prisoners under the new Law unconditionally. Reply immediately, care, Superintendent, Presidency Jail, Calcutta.

C. R. Das

A. K. Azad

No. 4: Gandhi's reply to the above

Sabarmati, 19th December, 1921

Your wire. Composition and date of Conference should be previously determined. Release should include prisoners convicted for Fatwas including Karachi ones. Subject to these conditions, in addition to yours, we can, in my opinion, waive Hartal.

Gandhi

No. 5: To Gandhi from Shyamsundar Chakravarti (who was then working in collaboration with Das in jail)

Bengal opinion favour opportunity for negotiation which proposed Conference will afford. Giving assurance of real truce thought reasonable. Releases suggested by you may be expected before Conference actually meets. Wire advice immediately.

Shyamsunder

No. 6: Gandhi's reply to the above

Sabarmati, 21st December, 1921

My opinion, either Conference can take place without suspension Non-co-operation; or, if truce essential, terms of Conference, its compo-

sition, etc. must be previously settled. We are not offering aggressive Civil Disobedience. If Govrenment means well, they should retrace steps by unconditionally withdrawing notification, disbandment, and public meetings, and doing partial reparation by discharging those unwarrantably imprisoned. Was it not wicked to enforce Laws which were under promise of repeal? Let them put down violence, veiled or intended, but we must resist with our lives this wanton violent suppression of freedom of opinion.

Gandhi

No. 7: To Gandhi from Malaviya

Calcutta, 20th December, 1921

Implore you, wire immediately to following effect.

If points mentioned in Das's telegram to you accepted and composition and date of Conference agreed upon, we will call off Hartal and see that pending conclusion of proposed Conference, Non-co-operation activities other than those relating to National Education, Swadeshi and Prohibition of intoxicants without picketing in any case will be suspended and that real truce will be observed on your side. Such assurance essential in the best interests of cause we all hold dear.

Malaviya

No. 8: Gandhi's reply to Malaviya

Sabarmati, 20th December, 1921

Regret exceedingly inability to give undertaking asked. Non-co-operation can cease only after satisfactory result of Conference. In no case, have I any authority to decide for Congress.

Gandhi

No. 9: To Gandhi from Jamnadas Dwarkadas (the emissary)

Calcutta, 21st December, 1921

Can you imagine how heart-breaking it is for me? Cannot express despair in words. Came full of hope only to find that your subsequent telegram to Pandit Malaviyaaji and Das practically cancelled all you told me. Fail to understand. I venture to believe it is not yet too late. Earnestly beg of you to respond to the appeal for truce in larger interests of country. You of all cannot fail to take higher standpoint. Your consent may yet enable us to bring about Conference which country at large, including large number of your followers, desires. Pray wire fully.

Jamnadas Dwarkadas
(Clear line telegram)

*No. 10: Gandhi's reply to the above**Sabarmati, 22nd December, 1921*

My word to you abides. Prepared individually unconditionally attend any Conference. Viceroy putting you wrong track. Tell me concrete terms to be observed. Only cannot waive voluntary Hartal till terms stated in telegram to Das satisfied.

Gandhi

These important telegrams have remained so long hidden from the general public. In giving them wide publicity in this narrative, it is hoped that even at this late stage, they will be found interesting as revealing the innermost history of this vital episode.

As regards these negotiations, I record here their history as described by an admiring chronicler of Congress events.

The Prince was to visit Calcutta on the 25th December and the Government of Bengal, unlike that of Bombay, proclaimed the enrolment of volunteers illegal under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and a large number of persons were arrested, including Mr. and Mrs. Das and their son. Soon after, the U. P. and the Punjab followed suit. By the date of the Ahmedabad Congress, Lalaji, Pt. Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, C. R. Das and family were all in jail under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, or under Sections 144, and 108 Indian Penal Code. These Sections were discovered and their applications to politicals was advised, it seems, by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who became the Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in August 1920. While Bombay had acted under the ordinary law, Bengal, the U. P. and the Punjab invoked the Repressive Laws.

It was at this juncture that negotiations were opened between the Congress and the Government. The Viceroy, under the arrangements made in shifting the metropolis from Calcutta to Delhi, resides in Calcutta for three or four weeks every year during the Christmas season and the Prince of Wales was to spend his Christmas in Calcutta. Lord Reading's presence at Calcutta under the circumstances was taken advantage of by intermediaries like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to bring about the understanding between the Government and the people and Lord Reading was willing—if only to avoid the boycott of the celebrations on the 25th December in Calcutta. A deputation headed by Malaviya waited on the Viceroy on the 21st December. Mr. Das was in Alipore Jail in the City of Calcutta and telephonic communications took place between him and the intermediaries. Soon Gandhi had to be consulted and he was in Ahmedabad, and by telegraphic communications it was agreed to by Government that the Civil Disobedience

prisoners should be released and a Round Table Conference was to be held in March with 22 representatives for the Congress to consider the Reform Scheme.

Das's demand was for the release of all prisoners under the new Law (Criminal Law Amendment Act). This would have left men like Lalaji in jail, besides the Karachi Fatwa prisoners who included Maulana Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew and various others. The Karachi prisoners were those who were convicted on November 1, 1921, for having participated in the All India Khilafat Conference held in July 1921, where the resolution (stated above in this narrative) regarding Military service had been passed. Some Ulemas endorsed this resolution in a Fatwa—which is a decree issued by the learned Divines amongst the Muslims prescribing or proscribing certain acts under certain conditions.

After the failure of the negotiation as stated above, Das felt very hurt and eventually in June 1923 made a speech at Madras, an important extract from which is quoted below:

I myself led people to prison. I started the movement in Bengal. I sent my son first to jail. My son was followed by my wife, and then I went to prison, because I knew there was electricity there. I knew that the spirit of resistance that manifested itself was mighty and the proudest Government did bend to it. You (Gandhi) bungled it, and mismanaged it. Now you turn round and ask people to spin and do the work of Charka alone. [This has reference to Gandhi's articles in *Young India*.] The proudest Government did bend to you. The terms came to me and I forwarded them to the Headquarters, because at that time I was in jail. If I had not been in jail, I would have forced the country to accept them. After they had been accepted, you would have seen a different state of things.

It is needless to state that as this speech was understood as containing a veiled condemnation of Gandhi, it created a furore in Congress circles. Contributions in the Press poured in from several quarters, some defending Das and Malaviyaji and others condemning them and protecting Gandhi from such attacks. One such contribution, the perusal of which will prove interesting even at this date, appeared in a Bombay newspaper (*Voice of India* 12-6-1923) under the heading, "A Piece of History Excavated", "Pandit Malaviyaji's Negotiations Prior to Round Table Conference," "Who Is Responsible For Failure?", "A Refutation of Das's Statement."

It was a contribution by Gandhi's close associate Krishna

Das dated from Calcutta on 6 June. It began with the following observation. "*The Servant* (Bengal newspaper) of 9 June publishes the original correspondence (the telegrams mentioned above)". After making reference to these telegrams, Krishna Das observed:

At the time to which these negotiations refer, I was at the "Ashram" at Sabarnati serving Mahatmaji as his Personal Assistant, and everything passed through my hands. I would not have ordinarily disclosed the telegrams containing the actual terms of negotiation; but having regard to the veiled insinuations made against Mahatmaji contained in the Deshbandhu's speech, I feel it a duty, now that Mahatmaji is not in our midst [at that date he had been convicted and was serving a term of imprisonment], that I should disclose the whole truth about the matter. But I must try to help the reader to come to a proper understanding of the situation at that time. You will find, what is already public property, that Pandit Malaviyaji was apparently acting on behalf of Lord Reading in these negotiations. (This was later stoutly denied by Malaviyaji as will appear in the following pages of this narrative). He was the intermediary, to help in calling off, if possible, the Hartal, [this was also later denied].

Malaviyaji implored Mahatmaji by wire to relax the condition of the release of Karachi and Fatwa prisoners [see telegram No. 7 above]. But Mahatmaji was inexorable [see telegram No. 8 above]. While Mahatmaji would on no account call off the hartal on a mere promise of an indefinite Conference, Shri Das could build high hopes on such a promise. The other point of difference was that Mahatmaji could not even think of calling off the hartal without including the great Karachi and other Fatwa prisoners in the list of releases, while our other leaders were quite agreeable to waive that issue. It was on these two vital questions that the proposal of the Conference broke down. Deshbandhu Das in his Madras speech (delivered by Das at a later date) says—"The proudest Government did bend to you." My answer is that Government did nothing of the kind. They were simply manoeuvring for a favourable position. They were anxious to proclaim to the world, to England in particular, the success of the Prince's mission and welcome here, without committing themselves to anything out of which they could not wriggle. Mahatma Gandhi was the only man whom the Government could not befool, whereas it was the other leaders who did "bungle".

It was Mahatmaji who saved India's honour at that most critical juncture. What could Deshbandhu have done, if he were out of jail at that time, but drag the fair name of India's leader into the mire by accepting Malaviyaji's conditions, which were no conditions, because they could have been brushed aside by the Government the moment

they had served their purpose, which was to get the leaders to call off the Hartal. "The terms came to me and I forwarded them to the Headquarters," says Shriyut Das, "because at that time I was in jail." By Headquarters, I take it that he refers to Mahatmaji. What terms came to him? None at all. He was simply consulted by Malaviyaji, after the latter had failed to get Mahatmaji's consent to the conditions proposed by him as the price of calling off the hartal. The dates of the telegrams make the whole point clear.

If the so-called terms came at all to anybody, it was to Mahatmaji in the first instance.

What were the terms the Deshbandhu accepted and forwarded to Headquarters? Were they terms that enhanced either his sense of self-respect, or that of the Congress itself? Deshbandhu was obsessed with the idea of something turning up as the result of the proposed Round Table Conference. One is simply amazed at the credulity that could put faith in a Conference of that sort which did not commit Government to any vital particulars, as Mahatmaji wanted that it should commit itself.

To understand this, we must get to the rock-bottom of the whole affair, viz., the political significance of the Prince's visit. I will first of all give here an extract from *The Nation and the Athenaeum* (p. 645) of London of 28th January, 1922, which explains itself, and a direct reference to Malaviyaji.

REFLECTIONS IN INDIA—THE PRINCE'S PROGRESS
(By our Indian correspondent)

Whom the Viceroy consulted it is difficult to say; I am told on good authority that in inviting the Prince he acted against the advice of his provincial Governors, who reported public opinion as everywhere hostile, and in accordance with the assurance of his Indian Counsellors, Pandit Malaviya and others, who promised adequate success (the italics were Krishna Das's). The correspondent goes on to add—This account, if true, shows how little eminent Indians can know about their own countrymen; but anyhow, it is easier to believe than another account which says that the Prince has come to India because he wanted to come.

Krishna Das continued:

The one thing that mattered with the Government was the calling off of the hartal, and everything else was subsidiary. The Round Table proposal was, indeed, a move on the diplomatic chessboard, which, if it

did not serve its purpose, could be easily manoeuvred back into some other position of vantage. Mahatmaji saw that the Government was not really penitient, but was simply playing a game of diplomacy in the interests of the success of the Prince's mission, and he wired to Panditji on the 19th of December 1921 (see telegram No. 2 above). Deshbandhu Das did not see through this game. He was fretting in jail and accusing Mahatmaji of having "bungled". Lord Reading was, indeed, a far greater diplomat than Deshbandhu and had almost outmanoeuvred the latter, had not Mahatmaji saved the situation. It seems that Deshbandhu Das had in his composition a good deal of faith in declarations and promises, a faith he ought to have shed long ago in the light of actual facts and experiences. Why should Government be so anxious about the success of the Prince's visit? The people of India had been officially told that the Prince wanted to come out to India out of sheer goodwill towards his future subjects and there was nothing of a political game underlying the affair.

But the real fact was just the reverse, if we are to believe the report of the Director of the Central Bureau of Information of the Government of India itself. A periodical published in Melbourne (Australia) under the title of *Stead's Review* in its issue of 26th November 1921, made certain important statements based on the Report of the Director of the Central Bureau of Information which disclosed the true official secret of the purpose for which the Prince was brought over to these shores. I quote only the following few sentences:

The masses of India, ignorant and illiterate as they are, are wedded to the idea of personal rule. They understand and appreciate the pomp and pageantry of power, and will be swept off their feet by way of emotional enthusiasm for the Kaiser-I-Hind and his son. Above all, the officials count on the winning personality of the Prince himself. *They hope that aided by a background of oriental magnificence, the Western Prince may eclipse the personal influence of the Eastern mystic [meaning Gandhi].* (The Italics were Krishna Das's.)

After quoting this Krishna Das continued:

That visit was intended to have a definite outstanding political objective. The name and fame of Mahatma Gandhi, it was fondly hoped, would be eclipsed by a sudden and tremendous uprush of loyal mass feeling towards their future King-Emperor. The Bureaucracy was building on its experience of such unexampled loyalty to the present King-Emperor, then the Prince of Wales, during the anti-partition days. That was the original purpose, and it was a political purpose.

On all important points the Government was adamant. Malaviyaji and Deshbandhu Das simply gave the whole show away by not being equally adamant. Then, in the matter of the Round Table Conference,

both Malaviyaji and Deshbandhu staked everything upon a mere promise. This was equally childish; for here the Government were not committed to anything—either in the matter of date, nor that of personnel, nor of anything else in particular, nor even whether the decision of the said Conference, if it did come to anything, should be binding on the Government. On these grounds, it is clear that there was nothing in the whole transaction which would justify Deshbandhu Das in his boast that the “proudest Government” did bend and was about to surrender, if only Deshbandhu were out of jail and had an opportunity to prevent the “bungling”, which in his imagination, did occur at the hands of Mahatmaji.

At a later stage Shyamsundar Chakravarti, (whose name appears in Telegram No. 5 as pleading for the proposed Conference and adding that Bengal opinion favours the opportunity for negotiation) came out with his explanation as to how he came to take part in this Conference. What I am quoting now appeared in the Bombay paper, *Bombay Chronicle* (26 June 1923) under the heading: “1921 Negotiations—Further Revelations—Shyamsundar Chakravarty’s Reply”. It appears that Das’s hostile speech had stirred loyal Congress circles to their very foundations and, if there was space, it would have been possible to include in this interesting narrative how friend after friend turned against Das for the sin, that he suggested “bungling” on the part of Gandhi. At a celebration of Gandhi Day at Calcutta on 19th June, Shyamsundar Chakravarti spoke and offered a reply to Das’s speech at Madras. He prefaced his remark with the observation: “I shall now recite what I still remember of the actual facts.” Then he mentioned his view regarding the several telegrams mentioned above and his explanation of the same. He concluded with the observation that he had not at all changed his opinion about the futility of the negotiations and he confessed that he succumbed to a weakness in trying to make matters smooth in the full belief that all the negotiations were quite safe in the hands of Gandhi and the tangle was sure to be straightened out by him.

No comments are necessary on this *ex-post-facto* explanation of Shyamsundar.

To placate this agitation against him, Das thought it desirable to give an interview to a representative of the Associated Press in Madras, in which he explained whom he meant by the expression “You bungled and mismanaged”, occurring

in his Madras speech as stated above. *The Servant* of Calcutta referring to this interview made the following observations:

We are really pained to find that Shri Das was capable of such a transparent evasion as the Associated Press reveals. This is a strong expression to use against Shri Das but the telegrams that passed between him and Mahatmaji make the point absolutely clear. What does the Associated Press Reporter make him (Das) say? Mr. Das said he failed to discover why his speech was taken to be an insinuation on Mr. Gandhi. He has insinuated nothing and is not in the habit of insinuating. He was dealing with the causes of the present depression and, in dealing with them, he had to deal with what took place in connection with the settlement. Regarding the statement that no terms were sent to him, Mr. Das asserts they were, and that Government arranged to give him a clear line. He further states that Pandit Malaviyaji's negotiations with Mr. Gandhi had absolutely nothing to do with an offer which was made to him and which he communicated to Mr. Gandhi.

The comment of The Servant continued:

Now, when as a result of the tug-of-war between Deshbandhu and Mahatmaji, Mahatmaji won and Deshbandhu lost, the hartal was not called off and the Round Table Conference did not materialise.

Now the question arises through whose "bungling" and "mismanagement" did Deshbandhu fail, if it was not Mahatmaji's? In his Madras speech Mr. Das said "You bungled it and mismanaged it. Now you turn round and ask the people to spin and do the work of Charka alone." Who is this "you" in Das's imagination, who stood in his way and spoilt all his efforts, and who, after he had 'bungled', asked people to spin? Deshbandhu says in effect "It is most uncharitable of you, foolish people, to weigh against me and impute to me charges against the Mahatmaji. For, I am not in the habit of insinuating against anybody". But the same man who 'bungled' and 'mismanaged' was guilty also of preaching the virtues of spinning on the charka. To this, Deshbandhu, with a wave of the hand, declares in the Press interview that he was discussing airily when he made these references and that he was not finding fault with anybody, least of all Gandhiji, although it was the latter who had nullified Das's efforts. The Madras speech was a firing in the air on Deshbandhu's part, although the only person who could at all 'bungle' and 'mismanage' as against Deshbandhu, was Gandhiji. Here the following words from one of Deshbandhu's own speeches made at Trichinopoly on the 10th instant come most handy. Says Deshbandhu (in another connection) "I know the practice of Law is a dangerous profession. It trains you to be ready

at all times with interminable statements." "To this may we not add", says *The Servant* "with Shri Das's approval, that prolonged practice at the Bar habituates a lawyer to argue against the right, and, on occasions, even to resort to transparent evasions."

This controversy ended, so far as it could, by Malaviyaji coming out with a clarifying statement in a frank and strong interview in keeping with his high reputation as an honest politician. It stands in strong contrast with the evasions, prevarications and subterfuges of the other politicians who got mixed up with Malaviyaji's reconciliatory effort. In that interview, Malaviyaji makes a frank attempt, not so much to justify himself as to defend Gandhiji and, what was more strange under the circumstances, to defend the Viceroy, Lord Reading, who had in this controversy been criticized, as Malaviyaji thought, in an unjust manner. A short summary of this interview appeared in the *Times of India* of 4 July, 1923, as follows:

At the outset Pandit Malaviya denies the assertion that the object of the visit of the Prince of Wales was to counteract the popularity of Mr. Gandhi (as stated by Krishna Das) and points out that it has become a tradition that every heir-apparent of the British Throne, must visit India. In 1920 he (Malaviyaji) supported the idea that the Prince should visit India hoping that, before the visit materialised, the grievances relating to the Punjab and the Khilafat would be removed. Malaviyaji proceeded "when I again went to Simla in October 1920 my hopes that the people's grievances would be adequately remedied before the Prince's arrival were buried. With real regret I told the representative of the Government to whom I had an opportunity of speaking, that they should take it as an inevitable fact that, while the officials and the aristocratic party would welcome the Prince, the public at large would boycott all functions held in his honour and I urged that the best thing that could be done in the situation was that each party should be left free to do what it wished and not to be interfered with by the other."

In another long interview (*The Voice of India* Bombay of 4 July 1923) Malaviyaji dealt categorically with Krishna Das's charges and observed:

Mr. Krishna Das would have the public believe that the negotiations were started by or on behalf of Lord Reading and with the only object of calling off the hartal, when he did not, as a matter of fact, mean

to do anything. The assertion is wrong. The assumption is entirely unjustifiable. Naturally the Viceroy must have desired that the hartal should be abandoned and I have no doubt he would have been intensely pleased if it was. But I never received so much as a hint from Lord Reading to start any negotiations for the Round Table Conference or to take any steps to call off the hartal. I approached him not with the object of helping to call off the hartal but of securing the release of my countrymen who had been wrongly imprisoned and the withdrawal of notifications and with the object that there should be a Round Table Conference at which important questions that divided the Government and the people should be discussed. It should have been obvious to any one that, in the circumstances of the situation, the Government could only think of acceding to these large requests, if opposition to the Prince's welcome was abandoned and the assurance of a real truce was promised on the part of Mr. Gandhi and his followers. The expectation that it should be abandoned must, no doubt, have been the greatest consideration which weighed with the Viceroy in entertaining the idea of the deputation and its proposals. But, when I approached him, I did not find him ready to agree to a Round Table Conference or to any of the proposals I made to him. It took me three interviews to persuade Lord Reading to receive a deputation.

Then after mentioning the facts relating to his intercession Malaviyaji proceeded:

It will be clear from this that Mr. Gandhi had eventually accepted the proposals with the modifications which were suggested. It is unfortunate that his second telegram to Shyamsundar did not reach Calcutta before the deputation waited upon the Viceroy. I have deplored this as a great misfortune. But we must not lightly blame Mr. Gandhi for it. Mr. Gandhi's opposition to the Prince's reception, including the hartal, was based upon a principle. He had consistently advocated it for two years. With him, the Nation's honour and interest were involved in it. If, before agreeing to waive hartal, he wished to make sure that he was doing it on sufficient grounds, he was not to be blamed. The time was short, the distance great and the issues grave. However much we may deplore the result, we must be fair to Mr. Gandhi. I may add that the Viceroy also took a somewhat similar view of the situation, when, in reply to our address and referring to non-co-operation activities he said, "I look in vain in your address, for any indication that these activities will cease. I fully understand that none of you is in a position to give an assurance to this effect, for none of you have been authorised to make it. I hope that I shall not be misinterpreted. I am not suggesting any reproach to any one concerned. All I mean is that whatever hopes may have been enter-

tained, have not been realised, and that, therefore, when we are meeting today, necessarily rather hurriedly in view of the circumstances, the assurance for which, I confess, I had been looking as a necessary part of the discussion is not forthcoming. I quite appreciate there may have been difficulties in the brief time allowed and also in the great distance separating us. I do not know from the address presented to me what view is taken by the leaders, who are responsible for non-co-operation activities in the sense that I find no assurance from them that these activities will cease, if a Conference were to be convened."

The spirit in which the negotiations were carried on, says Pandit Malaviya was also well expressed by the Viceroy in the words which I think it only fair to quote below:

I wish with all my heart that it had been possible to deal with these problems in a large and generous spirit, worthy of such an occasion in the history of India. Had the offer been made to discontinue open breaches of the law for the purpose of providing clearer atmosphere for the discussion of the remedies suggested, my Government would never have been backward in response. We would have been prepared to consider the new situation in the same large and "generous spirit and I would have conferred with the Local Government for that purpose. I should have wished and I know I speak out not only my own thoughts but those of Pandit Malaviyaji in this respect, that if such conditions had supervened, no advantage or triumph should be claimed on either side and no reproach should be made, by the one to the other, of having been forced to yield or not having the courage to proceed with its campaign. I should have wished to see a new spirit introduced in this respect. I do not stand alone in addressing you. I believe that if you were to give expression to your views, you would all agree with me that a new spirit should be created for the purpose of considering a Conference in different circumstances and with higher hopes. I deeply regret that these are not the present conditions."

The object of my giving these large extracts from the Viceroy's and Malaviyaji's speech is to prove that the attempt of reconciliation broke down at this time, on the question of the release of the Ali Brothers, and the Fatwa prisoners and that, notwithstanding this failure, both the sides had come very near in a friendly spirit of reconciliation which unfortunately did not materialize at that time.

Later, on reaching Bombay from Ahmedabad, Jinnah and myself met and conceived the idea of taking up the threads of reconciliation where they had been dropped at Ahmedabad.

We felt that the differences between the Congress and the Viceroy were very few and that the Viceroy in his speech at Calcutta on 21 December 1921 and later in his reply to Malaviyaji's deputation, (quoted above) had expressed a desire to arrive at an honourable understanding with Gandhi. We, therefore, called together a few friends to consider the question of starting fresh negotiations for a settlement. Accordingly, I find in my diary of 1 January 1922, the following entry:

Meeting about holding representative Conference in Bombay. Present, Malaviya, Jinnah, Ambalal Sarabhai, Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Bhurgri, Natarajan and myself.

Ambalal Sarabhai of Ahmedabad was a new colleague. He had for a long time hung on the fringe of political activities relating to Gandhi and, at our request, he very generously placed at our disposal his beautiful house at New Marine Lines, where our subsequent meetings were held from 2 to 13 January 1922.

Fortunately, we found one encouraging circumstance, viz., two articles in *Young India* written by Gandhi, respectively on 22 and 29 December 1921. He was not in Bombay at this time and we did not wish to trouble him to be present until all preparations for calling the proposed Conference on non-party lines were complete. But his articles held out hopes of co-operation. On 22 December 1921 he wrote under the caption, "Round Table Conference", as follows:

The pages of *Young India* are rarely occupied with an examination of what Rulers think. It is an idle speculation. But as the papers are discussing, advising and debating upon such a Conference, I have considered it appropriate to devote some space to an examination of the mentality of the chief actor in the drama now being played in India. In my opinion, such a Conference is bound to prove abortive till Lord Reading is disabused of the idea that non-co-operation is confined to a few misguided zealots. If he wants co-operation and contentment, he must placate the Non-co-operators. He must see that non-co-operation is not a disease. It is the chief symptom of a disease. The disease consists in a triple injury to the people of India. And no palliative will suit the patient, so long as the centre of the disease is not tackled. In my opinion, therefore, a Conference at which Government is represented will be useful only when the latter has tried

the Non-co-operators to his satisfaction and measured their strength in their quantity and quality. I warn our friends against entertaining the idea of a Conference with the Government till they find that it is truly penitent and means to appreciate the popular side.

As a contribution of the Non-co-operators towards a peaceful settlement Gandhi added:

Let it be understood that Non-co-operators are not offering Civil Disobedience that they had intended to. Non-co-operators are merely on the defensive. They have not taken, as they certainly intend to take, the offensive as soon as they are fairly certain of non-violent atmosphere.

On 29 December Gandhi wrote again in *Young India* a commentary on Lord Reading's speech at Calcutta in reply to the deputation led by Malaviya.

I must confess that I have read the Viceregal utterance with deep pain. I was totally unprepared for, what I must respectfully call his mischievous misrepresentation, of the attitude of the Congress and the Khilafat organizations in connection with the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Then, after justifying the agitation opposing the Prince's visit, Gandhi concluded as follows:

Let me make my position clear. I am most anxious for a settlement. I want a Round Table Conference. I want our position to be clearly known by every body who wants to understand it. I impose no conditions: but when conditions are imposed upon me prior to the holding of a Conference, I must be allowed to examine those conditions, and if I find that they are suicidal, I must be excused if I don't accept them. The amount of tension that is created can be regulated only by the Government of India, for the offensive has been taken by that Government.

These two articles were very carefully considered at our meetings where representatives of different schools of thought were present. Eventually we decided on 3 January 1922 to issue a general letter of invitation to important members of the public as follows:

Dear Sir,

The Ahmedabad Congress, by rejecting the motion for Independence and by relaxing the mandatory character of the non-co-operation resolution, has gone some way towards conciliating a large section of the people, which is opposed to forced marches in politics. This section

has been recently not very articulate, but its influence on that account is not the less decisive.

While the position of the Congress has been thus strengthened on one side, the countenance given to the early adoption of aggressive Civil Disobedience cannot but cause anxiety. It, therefore, behoves us all, both the Government and the people, to strain every nerve to see that Civil Disobedience is not resorted to, until at least it is far more obvious than at present that the resources of reason and statesmanship have been exhausted.

The great obstacle in the way of attempting this at present is the policy adopted by Government, within the last few weeks, of extending and applying the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act, eventuating in wholesale arrests and imprisonments, including those of many men of high character and integrity. This policy is, in our opinion, both unjust and unwise, the more so as it comes on the top of the discontent created by the failure, on the part of the Government, to satisfy the demands of the people with reference to the questions relating to the Punjab, the Khilafat and Swaraj. As the Liberal Federation, which met the other day at Allahabad, rightly pointed out, this policy has defeated its own object of alleviating popular sympathy and aggravating the general unrest.

A considerable body of opinion in the country is anxious to see a settlement effected, which would make it possible to secure redress of political grievances and the satisfaction of national aspirations in an atmosphere of peace and harmony. The Ahmedabad Congress, in rejecting the proposal for severing India's connection with the British Empire, has reflected the opinion, still retained by the bulk of thoughtful people in the country, that it is possible to achieve full national development within the orbit of the British Commonwealth. It is, therefore, necessary at this juncture for all those who realise the evil consequences bound to ensue on a continuance of the present deadlock, to confer together and devise means whereby it will be possible to open wide the door to an honourable settlement. It has been suggested that, with this object in view, a representative Conference should be called to consider the situation in all its aspects and to decide upon a course leading to a satisfactory solution of the present difficulties.

If you are in favour of such a Conference, please let us know, at your earliest convenience, preferably by wire, whether you will be able to attend the Conference, which is proposed to be held in Bombay on the 14th instant.

Yours truly

Madan Mohan Malaviya
M. A. Jinnah
M. R. Jayakar

Purshottamdas Thakurdas
Ambalal Sarabhai
K. Natarajan
G. M. Bhurari

Our invitations included nearly all important men in the country, irrespective of political affiliations. We received a very good response. Many preliminary meetings were held during the interval and ultimately the Conference met at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall in Bombay on Saturday, 14 January 1922. About 300 people were present. Mrs. Besant's party including herself was present at the meeting. The proceedings of the day began with a statement by Malaviya in which he explained the genesis of his efforts that had resulted in the convening of the gathering that afternoon. He emphasized the fact that the present crisis had arisen as a result of the grossest misapplication of the law since the establishment of British Rule, and that it revealed the complete helplessness of the people to influence the Government. This had brought into relief the absolute necessity of Self-Government, vesting power in the hands of the people.

After Panditji had spoken, Shankaran Nair, who had been selected as the Chairman of the Conference, took his seat. Jinnah then read out the draft resolution to the effect that the convening of a Round Table Conference was desirable to consider the present situation in the country and that a Committee to be nominated by the Conference should be appointed to suggest the *modus operandi* of effecting such a purpose. He pointed out that the object of the present Conference was to settle the terms of the truce and added that there would be no Conference until the Viceroy gave an assurance that he had the sanction of the British Government for carrying into effect whatever decisions might be reached by the Conference. Jinnah hoped that no one present was against a settlement and he appealed to all to unite and see that the object of the Conference was achieved.

Gandhi was then called upon to address the Conference. He did so, sitting on the table. He thanked the conveners for bringing all parties together on a common platform. He was, he said, pining for an opportunity to lay bare his heart to his friends gathered at the Conference and to show that he would be reasonable in considering the question of effecting a settlement. He pointed out that, so far as he was personally concerned, he was quite willing to attend any Conference without making any conditions, but so far as the Congress and the Non-co-operators were concerned, the position was different. Certain conditions which he outlined, including the re-

lease of the political prisoners besides those imprisoned under the Criminal Law Amendment and the Seditious Meetings Act, must necessarily be fulfilled by Government before the Non-co-operators could accept the proposal of a Round Table Conference. He was not there to ask for the humiliation of Dyer or O'Dwyer. He did not wish to see a single human being humiliated. What he was concerned to know was that the heart of the Government had changed and that it showed true repentance. Gandhi mentioned a long list of Government sins of omission and commission which had made the situation worse than that under Martial Law and, that so long as such things happened in the country by the express sanction of Government, any idea of a Conference would be futile. Continuing, he regretfully acknowledged that some Non-co-operators had been guilty of violence and he apologised to the Conference for all such conduct. But, such incidents were few and far between. He added that in accepting the invitation to the Conference, the Non-co-operators merely wanted to prove their sympathy for and with the conveners but, beyond it, they did not intend to be party to the passing of the resolutions. But that did not mean, he added, that they did not want to associate themselves in the efforts to bring about an honourable settlement under the proper atmosphere.

Hormasji Wadia, the Liberal Leader, then spoke. "Law and order," he said, "were the tyrant's plea in all history." The Liberals were for Law and Order but one price they could not pay for Law and Order, i.e. the loss of freedom of speech, press and association. He admitted that the last two months' happenings had caused a deep searching of heart among the Liberals as to the "Reforms" which had been shown to be illusory and gave them no security in spite of three Indian members of the Executive Council and in spite of popular Ministers. He spoke strongly against Civil Disobedience but he added that he was anxious to see that an honourable settlement was arrived at.

A general discussion then followed in strict regard to the understanding that had been arrived at the previous morning at Gandhi's residence between him and his Non-co-operation friends and fellow workers. No Non-co-operator took part in the proceedings. Amongst those who spoke were Bomanji, Sadashiv Aiyar, Satyamurti, Gokarnath Mishra and H. Kunzru.

It appears that for some unaccountable reason Vithalbhai

Patel felt resentful at the consideration Gandhi was showing towards us—the promoters of the Malaviya Conference. Patel, though invited to the Conference, did not come to occupy a prominent place amongst its promoters, nor amongst the Non-co-operators who represented Gandhi's view at a meeting of the Conference. At that meeting, Patel contented himself with hurling gibes and sneers at us, and particularly at me, doubting our sincerity and motives in arranging for the Conference. He regarded himself as a more honest follower of Gandhi than some of us, like Malaviya and myself, and I was the special object of his attention as our differences at that time were growing. These differences appeared to be due to vital differences of temperament and methods and increased in course of time as the later chapters will show. His sneers and gibes were resented and on 14 January 1922, I wrote a letter to Gandhi, an important extract from which I quote below:

The painful experience which, I in particular have been having for the last few days in connection with the Malaviya Conference, the gibes and sneers to which I have been subjected for my sin in having joined in convening the Conference, are so manifest and open that they have led me to ask myself whether I have, at all, an honourable place in your party even in the extreme left flank. It has been my misfortune that I have been unable to give my intellectual assent to some or rather many parts of your creed, but, with all that, I make bold to say, with God as my witness, that I have tried not to be unworthy of you on all critical occasions, when work or sacrifice was needed. But I see that there is a limit to such things and tonight's experience, to which you were a silent witness, was the last straw on the camel's back. And the pity of it was that the malign attack was from Patel of all other people. I would not like to spoil my pen by saying what I think of his shifting loyalty to you personally. But this has led me seriously to consider my position in your party. Either I belong to it or I don't, but I can't long survive the present position of suspicion and distrust. I honestly feel that amongst many of your followers like Patel I have no place of honourable companionship, that my continuance there only makes my position irksome and painful. Today's incident only reveals the cold suspicion with which I have been treated for some time by many of your present followers and I feel that my attachment to your party is only a source of pain to myself and weakness to your party. Of course, my loyalty to you and to the spirituality of your ideals will ever continue. I only wish that you had better exponents of that spirituality than Vithalbhai Patel. Perhaps, in the absence of other men, you have employed such agents

but you must forgive some of us who are subjected to insults of such a sneaking character. If, after long patience we flare up, you will forgive us, also if by this letter I am causing you any pain. But whatever my decision and wherever I may work, your noble ideal will always inspire me. It is a misfortune that such things should happen, but perhaps it is better that I should work without party obligations which have grown onerous.

To this letter I received from Gandhi on 15 January a kind and courteous reply. I quote below an important extract:

Sunday Morning

I got your note just when I was in the thick of a meeting. I have now got up early to reply to your note and to frame resolutions for the 10 o'clock meeting.

I have taken the insult offered to you as I have taken the insults offered to me by Mr. Patel not once but on many occasions. It has become second nature with him. I had really come to think that you and he had, somehow or other, become the best of friends. Now if you permit me I should like to show your letter to Mr. Patel for his own good. I take it, you know, that he and I frankly do not agree. His way is not my way. He knows that we travel in different direction, so much for Mr. Patel.

I have no party save that of Truth. I want to live for nothing but Truth. Whether you remain in the Non-co-operation ranks, or whether you do not, I cannot desert you, even as I cannot desert Malaviyaji, no matter where I find him for the time being. For I consider you to be a man of Truth. You have left in me the impression that you are too cultured to do anything wrong, knowing it to be such.

It appears that Gandhi showed my letter to Vithalbhai Patel, from whom I received the following letter on 15 January:

*Arya Bhavan,
Sandhurst Road West,
Bombay, 15th Jan. 1922*

My dear Jayakar,

I extremely regret that my remarks yesterday at the Conference have offended you. I never meant to give you any offence but I admit that my words were capable of the interpretations which, I believe, you seem to have placed on them. I do feel that I should not have let go the remarks which have offended you. I trust, after this expression of regret on my part, you will not allow your mind in any way to be troubled over the incident. Believe me.

Yours sincerely
V. J. Patel

The result of this controversy was that Patel, though enjoying well-merited political importance by reason of his services in the Legislature and outside, remained a disgruntled spectator throughout the Malaviya Conference.

From the very beginning of the Conference, Gandhi had cleared his attitude most fairly that the Non-co-operators' keeping apart so far as the resolutions of the Conference were concerned was in the best interests of the country. He appealed to the members attending the Conference to form a link between the Government and the Non-co-operators and not to place an undue strain on the Non-co-operators who were willing to help them in their deliberations.

The Conference began at 6 o'clock on Sunday the 15th. By invitation, Gandhi was present on behalf of the Non-co-operators and though he made it clear that he or his fellow Non-co-operators could have no official connection with the Committee, he expressed his willingness to assist the Committee in their deliberations. What happened after the Conference met, my diary entry states:

Shankaran Nair was most autocratic. So I gave him a hit and later Jinnah also did it. Shankaran Nair left the meeting in great huff.

The reason for his leaving was Gandhi's insistence on the release of certain prisoners as a condition of convening the Round Table Conference. When he vacated the Chair, Visvesvaraya was elected to fill the vacancy. The first Resolution was then proposed which was as follows:

Resolution No. 1:

This Conference is strongly of opinion that the policy, adopted by the Government within the last few weeks of extending and applying the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act in various parts of the country and of misusing ordinary Laws in connection with political offences, leading to wholesale arrests and imprisonments, including those of some of the most respected leaders and citizens, constitutes an unwarranted encroachment upon the elementary rights of citizenship, of freedom of press and liberty of speech and of association, has defeated its own object by alienating popular sympathy and aggravating the general discontent, and should be reversed without delay.

Gandhi said that he and his Non-co-operator friends did not desire to associate themselves with the Resolutions. He was

not in favour of stopping the activities of the Non-co-operators but if the Government agreed to the proposal for a Round Table Conference on the conditions mentioned in the Resolution, he would ask the Working Committee to suspend the activities, including the picketing of the liquor shops and Civil Disobedience till 31 January. That, however, did not mean that he would not go on making preparations for Civil Disobedience and securing recruits for the National Volunteer Corps. He described the minimum that he would accept in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and said that Swaraj should be immediately granted in accordance with the status of the Home Rule granted to the Dominions.

The Resolution was then put to the vote and passed. The Non-co-operators and many Liberals did not vote. It was pointed out that as the members were present only in their individual capacity and not as representatives of any party or the country, the Resolutions were not binding on the country.

The second Resolution was then proposed as follows:

Resolution No. 2:

This Conference is further of opinion that until it is clear beyond any doubt that no other means will secure a redress of the country's grievances than the status of full Responsible Government, the Civil Disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress should not be resorted to.

This Resolution was passed. The 3rd Resolution passed was as follows:

Resolution No. 3:

In response to the sentiments expressed by His Excellency the Viceroy in his speech at Calcutta on the 21st December 1921, and in order to explore all methods of reaching a harmonious and honourable settlement of the important issues now before the country, namely the Khilafat, the Punjab wrongs and the demand for Swaraj or Full Responsible Government on the Dominion basis, this Conference supports the proposal for a Round Table Conference between the Government and popular representatives and is of opinion that, in order to provide a favourable atmosphere for the dispassionate consideration of points in controversy, all Notifications and Orders passed by Government under Act 14 of 1908 Part II and the Seditious Meetings Act should be with-

drawn and all prisoners convicted or under arrest or prosecution under the aforesaid Notifications or Orders should be released, as also the Fatwa prisoners and that, inasmuch as prisoners for non-violent activities and other activities of innocent character have been convicted under cover of the ordinary laws, a Committee should be appointed by Government consisting of two persons—one nominated by Government and the other by a Committee of this Conference appointed by Resolution No. 5, with powers to them to investigate cases of persons hereinbefore referred to and such of them as might be recommended by the said Committee or an Umpire be released and that pending the result of the said Round Table Conference all Hartals, picketing and Civil Disobedience should cease.

Resolution No. 4 was as follows:

Resolution No. 4:

This Conference is likewise of opinion that having regard to the critical situation in the country and the desirability of effecting early settlement, a Round Table Conference should be called as soon as possible and His Majesty's Government should clothe the Viceroy with authority necessary for the purpose of arriving at a settlement.

This Resolution was also duly passed. Resolution No. 5 was as follows:

Resolution No. 5:

Without at present going into particulars of demands of the country with reference to the Punjab, Khilafat and Swaraj questions, this Conference hereby appoints a Committee of the following persons to carry on all communications with Government on the one hand and important political organizations in the country on the other, with the view of arranging composition, dates and other details relating to holding of a Round Table Conference and for all purposes incidental to carrying out these Resolutions, including, when necessary, the convening of another representative Conference. The Committee consists of 20 men, including Visvesvaraya, Malaviya, P. C. Ray, Dinshaw Petit, Jinnah, Jayakar, Natarajan, Hasan Imam, Bhurgri and Gour.

This Resolution was passed. The Conference then terminated.

Eventually, the Committee met from day to day and worked from 16 to 20 January 1922. The Resolutions were sent by wire to the Private Secretary of the Viceroy. A note was

added as follows:

Should His Excellency desire further elucidation regarding Conference, Chairman Sir M. Visvesvaraya and Secretaries Jinnah and Jayakar will wait on His Excellency on convenient date. General desire for peaceful, harmonious settlement, strongly reflected in proceedings of Conference.

On 16 January 1922 we addressed to public Institutions interested in the question, the following letter:

Dear Sirs,

We desire that Institutions like yours which are working for the advancement of the people should co-operate with our Committee for the purpose of establishing peace and harmony in the country on the basis of an honourable settlement of the points in controversy and we hope that you will give us all the assistance you can in achieving this laudable object. We may add that if you can state for our guidance the opinion of your Institution as regards the minimum demands that will satisfy public opinion in your part of the country, with reference to the three questions mentioned above, it will be an advantage. We can then focus public opinion on the three points in controversy, with the view of making representation to Government. May we also suggest to you the desirability of educating public opinion, by holding meetings or otherwise, about the necessity, at this critical juncture, of an early conciliation of the public mind? We shall be obliged if we can have an early reply to this letter.

We remain,

Yours faithfully

M. A. Jinnah

M. R. Jayakar

K. Natarajan

Secretaries,

Bombay Representative Conference
Committee

On the next day, 17 January 1922, Shankaran Nair issued a statement to the Press in which he stated:

We were called to consider together and devise means to come to an honourable settlement. I have come to the conclusion, along with many others, that any further Conference with Mr. Gandhi and his followers is useless. It is only right that I should give my reasons. The signatories to the manifesto placed certain proposals before the Conference yesterday. Mr. Gandhi did not accept those Resolutions. This morning (Sunday the 15th) the Committee appointed by the Conference which,

at his own request,—(the reason will appear later)—did not contain himself or any of his followers, framed, however, in consultation with him, Resolutions to meet with his wishes as far as possible. They were also not accepted by him. In the two long speeches he delivered, he defined as follows his own position, so far as any Conference with the Viceroy was concerned.

Shankaran Nair then quoted extracts from Gandhi's speeches which have been reproduced above. He particularly placed insistence in Gandhi's observation that Gandhi did not believe that a time had come for a Conference *as there had not been suffering enough for the people to acquire self-control over themselves*. He mentioned Gandhi's opinion, referring no doubt to the Government, "You [government] dare not declare Martial Law however far we go." Mr. Gandhi's followers, even those who expressed a mild assent in some respect, supported him in his attitude.

The statement disclosed a state of mind which would render any Conference nugatory of any satisfactory results. They will not justify us in approaching the Government in association with Mr. Gandhi and his followers for holding any Conference.

Mr. Gandhi does not want a Conference or settlement except on his own impossible terms and any stray observations made by him amid a crowd of statements supporting any other view are only calculated to mislead. That the Government should be "penitent" for their so-called misdeeds is, of course, an impossible condition and would never have been put forward by any one wishing for any amicable settlement.

In regard to the Punjab, he emphasised the fact that the Congress party would be satisfied with nothing less than carrying out the proposals made in the Congress Sub-Committee Report. It includes not only the punishment of the subordinate officials but practically the impossible condition of the deprivation of pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Dyer etc. With reference to the Khilafat matter, Mr. Gandhi said that the French must leave Syria—of course an impossible condition. They want England to leave Egypt. On this, it is not necessary to make any comment. So far as Swaraj is concerned, he wants, at once in the Central and Provincial Governments, full Dominion Status, as may be determined by the duly elected representatives of the people. For the election of representatives the Congress Constitution as to franchise etc. should be accepted.

He emphasised over and over again that these are the minimum demands which must be accepted by the Government and the Round Table Conference. It seems to me there is no good of any Government Conference with Mr. Gandhi and his party and it would not be

right to request the Round Table Conference to discuss these terms which the Government will not accept. Mr. Gandhi himself, therefore was quite right in saying that the Congress is not keen on a Conference.

The failure of the Reform Scheme to carry out the purpose the Parliament had in view, is demonstrated by the experience already gained and the subsequent events have shown the necessity of widening the scope of the scheme in other direction. In my opinion, we can put forward a more effective method than any suggested, which is likely to meet general acceptance. I am, therefore, so anxious for a Round Table Conference with the Government about Swaraj, Mussalman feeling about treaty of Severes and the Punjab that I felt that we should not allow, if possible, any impediment to stand in our way. No minimum demands should, therefore, be insisted upon with reference to the Punjab, Khilafat or any other matter. The decisions of these questions must be left to the Round Table Conference.

The release of some of the convicted persons like the Volunteers etc., the constitution of a Tribunal to consider the cases of others are made conditions precedent to holding a Conference. I do not object to a Tribunal for re-consideration if the Government are willing to accept the suggestion, though all the judges are not to be appointed by Government. This observation does not apply to the cases of the Ali Brothers and others in their position whose, (Fatwa prisoners) release, is, however, demanded as an essential preliminary to any Conference.

I agree that Government should not interfere with Mr. Gandhi's movement so long as there is no apprehension of any violence. The admission that any agitation should be strictly peaceful and of a non-violent character carries with it the admission that if violent, the Government may suppress it by any legitimate and legal means and punish those who are responsible for the same. That right carries with it the responsibility of taking any steps necessary to prevent the commission of those acts which would in all reasonable probability lead to violence which must cause suffering.

There is a lamentable feature of the situation which determines my attitude in this respect. Some of the persons arrested have put forward pleas which would not justify their unconditional release. We should not make their release, therefore, a condition precedent to the holding of the Conference.

As regards Messrs. Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali and others in that category, the Government's position is stronger. It is within the knowledge of Mr. Gandhi and many of us that they do not accept the principle of non-violent agitation. In view, however, of the promise of Mr. Gandhi that he would obtain Swaraj within a year if his method of non-violence is followed they did not press for violence. That year has elapsed and the Mussalmans feel that the pact with Mr. Gandhi is over. The well-known Mohammedan character, the proceedings

of the Khilafat Conference and of the Muslim League, the speech on this point by the President who represents the views of the Ali Brothers and their friends, leave no doubt in my mind that the Mussalmans are not under the restraint of the self-imposed obligations of Mr. Gandhi and satisfy me that they will not hesitate to resort to violence not only against Government but also against those who may not join them in their agitation. Recent occurrences also support this.

All circumstances point to the conclusion that they and their friends will continue the agitation on their release. I do not think it right, therefore, to insist on their unconditional release or make it a condition precedent for the Conference with the Government. The only ground of differentiation, the superior obligation to follow the religious injunctions even against the Laws of the country, has only to be stated in view of what is happening in Malabar to be discarded. An additional argument is the fact that Mr. Gandhi and his friends and the accused themselves welcome the arrests and convictions. I trust, therefore, that I shall not be deemed uncharitable if I said that the demand for the release of them is for the humiliation of Government or to preclude a Round Table Conference as suggested. It is possible that the refusal to release these persons might be used as a pretext for Civil Disobedience i.e. non-payment of taxes etc. The movement will then stand naked in all its illegality and hideousness. It is a fitting consummation of a policy which had its origin in a false promise of attainment of Swaraj within a year—a statement calculated and, therefore, made to mislead the ignorant masses, which all his intelligent supporters must have known to be impossible of attainment; supported by schemes, abandoned one after another in succession, when the suffering caused by them and their futility exposed their absurdity and the incapacity for political leadership of the leaders, and which in its later stages, when its consequences became apparent, has led to bloodshed, butchery of thousands, untold misery of thousands of women and children, ravishment of thousands of women. Civil Disobedience is necessarily bound to lead to bloodshed in the existing civil and political conditions and if carried out on an extensive scale, drench the country in blood. The movement of which Mr. Gandhi is the head has attained this proportion on account of the culpable weakness of Lord Chelmsford's Government, whose policy was continued by the new Government. There can be no excuse now that the character and consequences of the movement have become apparent.

The foreign Government inimical to Indian progress would watch with indifference, if not with satisfaction, the mutual slaughter that must follow Disobedience. Being of opinion that I cannot associate with Mr. Gandhi and his followers in asking for a Conference or in any other respect, for reasons, some of which are given above, and differing from the Conference on those vital questions, on which the Conference agrees with Mr. Gandhi, I have felt bound to leave the Conference of

which I was the Speaker at the close of the Committee.

The effect produced by the statement was immense and on its publication we felt that, so far as Lord Reading's Government was concerned, the pitch was queered. Shankaran Nair had done great service to India at the time of the Rowlatt Act and it was rumoured, with what truth it is difficult to say, that he came to blows with some of the British colleagues of extreme views. The views of such a person, therefore, of undoubted patriotic courage, were bound to have very great effect on Lord Reading whose Government he condemned as weak. We, however, pursued our efforts; to this statement of Shankaran Nair Gandhi gave a rejoinder which made matters worse. We tried to persuade him to leave Shankaran Nair alone at least for some time but Gandhi thought otherwise and he issued what he called a rejoinder, which appeared in the Bombay papers on 18 January. Gandhi said:

I have read Sir Shankaran Nair's letter with deep pain. It bears in itself traces of hurried draftsmanship and anger. I propose, therefore, not to answer seriatim the many misrepresentations it contains, but give only broad facts.

Between the Conference and myself there was perfect harmony, inspite of difference of opinion. I make bold to say that, on matters that were not of vital importance, I yielded without hesitation. The Resolutions are the result of mutual discussions and deliberations. It is undoubtedly true that I want the Government to be penitent, not in order to humiliate it, but in order to set it right with the people, and there will, certainly, be no peace in the land and no settlement until the Government acknowledges its mistakes and retraces its steps. The Resolutions are calculated to enable the Government to do so gracefully. Nobody questions the right of the Government to put down violence. Sir Shankaran Nair forgets what I said in reply to a question that I could conceive even the existence of a justifiable Martial Law, when it is introduced to protect people and has the endorsement of public opinion. The present proceedings of the Government, which bear all the characteristics of Martial Law, without the odium of the name, are intended neither to protect the people, nor have any public backing whatsoever. They are intended to consolidate the power of an utterly irresponsible bureaucracy. The Khilafat claim certainly includes the evacuation of Syria by the French, but Sir Shankaran should remember what I said. I declared, in the clearest possible language, that I would be satisfied if Great Britain sincerely supported the Mussalmans' claim regarding Syria. I said that the Mussalmans, and I in common with

them, thoroughly distrust Great Britain's intentions regarding the Turkish Nationalists and the just claims of the Indian Mussalmans. It is open, in a Round Table Conference, to the Government to demonstrate to the satisfaction of Non-co-operators that Great Britain is ready to do all in her power to satisfy the Mussalmans' claim. Sir Shankaran hardly does justice to himself or to me when he reports me as having said that I wanted the evacuation of Egypt, as a term of peace. In an answer to a question about Egypt, I remarked that although the Khilafat demand did not and could not include the evacuation of Egypt, when India had full Swaraj, she would certainly not permit a single Indian soldier to leave India in order to coerce brave Egypt into submission to a foreign yoke.

Sir Shankaran's attack upon the Ali Brothers is hardly worthy of him. The Ali Brothers do believe in the possibility and necessity of the use of violence for the vindication of religious or national rights. But I know that they are absolutely at one with the Congress programme and that they are more than ever convinced, that as India is circumstanced, non-violence is the only remedy open to her for the attainment of her freedom.

Sir Shankaran ought to know better than to impute to me the promise of Swaraj within one year. If I had made any such promise, I would not have kept my head on my shoulders. All that I said was that India could have Swaraj within one year and even less time, if she fulfilled the conditions categorically named at Calcutta and repeated at Nagpur in 1920.

It surprises me to notice that Sir Shankaran Nair imagines that a Round Table Conference is possible without the presence of the Ali Brothers. That the Government might not see its way to release such formidable opponents as the Ali Brothers I can well understand and they will release them only if Government desire to placate Indian opinion and substitute the forces of public opinion for the force of arms.

As this controversy gathered force, one of the Secretaries, Natarajan, thought it necessary to come out with a true explanation of the episode and accordingly he wrote to a Bombay paper. With reference to Sir Shankaran's letter, he said, he could not agree with him about his estimate of the result of the Conference.

What was the first object of the conveners in calling the Conference? To see that Civil Disobedience is not resorted to, until at least it is far more obvious than at present that the resources of reason and statesmanship have been exhausted. The Conference has secured that Civil Disobedience will not be resorted to till the 31st of January and,

if a Round Table Conference is called, thereafter, till the Conference negotiations come to a close. If they come to a successful close, as I have no reason to despair, then there will be no more talk of Civil Disobedience. If, unfortunately, the Conference fails, the Government will have, in addition to its present resources for meeting it, an important additional one in the support of a large section of opinion now neutral, which will then definitely range itself on its side, as the only means of averting the consequences to the country of Civil Disobedience.

As regards the conditions, it was stated in our letter of invitation that the policy, adopted by Government, within the last few weeks, of extending and applying the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act, eventuating in wholesale arrests and imprisonments, including those of many men of high character and integrity, was a great obstacle in the way of attempting to stop the movement towards Civil Disobedience at present. This policy has been condemned for various reasons by such widely different bodies as the Liberal Federation, the Non-Brahmin Conference, and the Indian Christian Conference. In fact, it is difficult to find a single reasonable quarter which has supported this policy. The Viceroy in his reply to the Malaviya deputation expressed his readiness to reverse this policy and release all prisoners if Non-co-operationists would cease their activities. I fail to see how the request for the release of this class of prisoners, can be said to humiliate the Government.

The letter of invitation did not refer to the prosecution under the normal law of the Fatwa prisoners but there is a general and strong consensus of opinion that many persons have been prosecuted under the ordinary law who ought not to have been, and the resolution which was ultimately adopted recommends, not the release of these prisoners but the appointment of a Committee to consider their cases on their merits. There is nothing humiliating to Government in this either.

I now come to the so-called "Fatwa prisoners". Let me premise my remarks on this matter by saying that there is much in what Sir Shankaran Nair says of the Khilafat movement and its methods and its principles with which I agree. I held and have said that Khilafat non-co-operation is responsible for the Mopla atrocities. I strongly feel that the Khilafat Conference and, to a less extent, the Congress leaders also have culpably ignored or minimised these doings. I feel also that the principles proclaimed by the extreme Khilafatists are a menace to non-Mohemmadans. But none of these facts, nor yet "the well-known character of Mohammadans" prevent me from feeling that the Fatwa Prisoners were not rightly prosecuted and punished. To generalise from the Mopla rebels to Mohammedans generally, is wrong and cruel and I deeply deplore the unfortunate use by one of Sir Shankaran Nair's eminence of a phrase which is as unjust as it is impolitic. Did

not a Hindu mob get out of hand and commit atrocities on Mahomedans in some part of Bihar two years ago? The situation is bad enough in all conscience, but for God's sake let us not make it worse by using thoughtless phrases even under extreme irritation. Mahatma Gandhi, to my mind, has done great service in controlling, as Sir Shankaran Nair admits, the excited feelings of the Khilafatists so long. His position in the country, commanding as it is, does not warrant him in assuming that India has definitely decided to fall in with his views. It has been greatly shaken by the Malabar and Bombay troubles and it is not far from the truth to say that, but for these Government prosecutions, it would have been an extremely precarious one today. At the Conference for the first time during the four years, he came face to face with a gathering of leaders who did not belong to his school of thought. If we look behind to words and phrases, it is not difficult to see that the experience was not without effect upon him.

To my mind, the political situation, as a result of the recent Conference, has become more defined, which in itself is a great thing. It has also disclosed parts and points, at which goodwill and patience may beat out a path-way to a peaceful and harmonious settlement of all outstanding problems.

The reception which the Press gave to our Conference varied. The Congress papers approved of the Conference on its results but would not have the candour to own it. As Gandhi co-operated with the leaders of the Conference, they would not condemn it. At the same time, to own that the Conference was a success would, they thought, be a humiliation in so far as non-Congress leaders brought about such a result. Some of them wrote with an air of superior condescension. *The Bombay Chronicle*, for instance, wrote under the caption "Open Door".

While we do not sympathise with Sir Shankaran Nair's tenderness for the prestige of a system which we hold must be abolished, we quite well understand that it were only tactful on a part of the Nation to allow the Government to feel that their defeat is not their humiliation. This will deceive nobody and do no harm, while it will perhaps allow Bureaucrats to feel less disconsolate in defeat. Provided India receives the substance of satisfaction, she is not disposed to insist too sternly that the Government's confession of error be made with all the repentant's panoply of sackcloth and ashes and lighted tapers. We are not unduly concerned with forms and rituals. Through the door that the Conference has opened we see Mahatma Gandhi and the people waiting. They are more than a trifle sceptical as to whether the Government can bring themselves to accept the only terms on which

they have consented to wait till the end of January—but they are waiting.

In a similar strain, the same paper wrote again in a later issue. The *Times of India* on the other hand wrote in a different strain. Under the caption "Beating the Air" it wrote editorially:

We were led by the conveners of what has been called the political Conference held in Bombay to believe that the main purpose of this gathering was to devise means whereby it would be possible to open wide the door to an honourable settlement of the political issues which now beset the country. With a view to attaining this end, Mr. Gandhi and some of his political associates were invited to be present. The expectations of those who thought, or who professed to think an honourable settlement was possible with Mr. Gandhi must have been based either on ignorance of the speeches and articles in which Mr. Gandhi has declared his political faith, or else on an amazing misreading of those speeches and articles. Now, however, the situation has been made clear beyond the possibility of doubt, not only in the report of the proceedings which has been published, but in the letter from Sir Shankaran Nair explaining the reasons which induced him to withdraw, which appears in this issue. The conveners of the Conference said they sought an honourable peace. Their word is accepted, for, they are honourable men. Does Mr. Gandhi seek an honourable peace? Sir Shankaran Nair tells us as a result of his experience what in effect we all knew before, that Mr. Gandhi is bent on the humiliation of Government. What conceivable basis of an honourable peace is to be found here? We stand, where we have always stood, for the full generous redress of every moral wrong which India sustained during and after the Punjab disturbances. If any such remain unredressed, we join with those who demand from His Excellency the Viceroy, their immediate removal. But what does Mr. Gandhi stand for? The punishment of one or two Indian subordinates, the cancelling of the pensions of Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. If these remain in the service of the State, any officers, whether British or Indian, who have been found guilty of gross abuses of their authority, not errors of judgment, for we are all guilty of them every day of our lives, they should not be there. It comes to this then that after all this prating of soul force, after all these disclaimers of any spirit of vindictiveness, Mr. Gandhi stands for an act whose legality is more than doubtful, whose vindictive immorality is not at all doubtful.

Then the Press article turned to the question of Khilafat and showed that the redress which Gandhi wanted was beyond the power of the Viceroy as it had political repercussions in

Europe. Like for instance Gandhi's demand that France should evacuate Syria and until France does so, his agitation against the Government of India was to continue.

Well may Mr. Gandhi be astonished at his moderation. Why he did not equally insist that France should evacuate Algeria and Spain, Ceuta, Russia, Georgia and the Caucasus? If the Russians were to threaten Constantinople or, what seems imminently possible, Mustapha Kemal Pasha in Anatolia, the Government of India is to be used as the whipping boy until such time as they withdraw. As for Swaraj, Mr. Gandhi says he stands for Full Dominion Status. But full Dominion Status based on what? On the Congress franchise. Well, we should be the last to belittle the genuine enthusiasm of many who went to Ahmedabad; and what is the claim of their constituencies to bear the complex burden of the governance of the three hundred and twenty millions of people? Mr. Jinnah and Pandit Malaviya were there. Let them give the answer. Let Mr. Gandhi recall his own protest in *Young India* of the indiscipline which characterised some of those who are to be the sole repositories of political power in India amid that atmosphere of peace and love. And amidst all this verbiage, one broad fact stands revealed, Gandhi does not want a Conference, which means that he does not want peace and why? Because India has not suffered enough? What have the tens of thousands of miserable people in Malabar, driven from their homes, ravished of their nearest, robbed of all that makes like worth living, including their faith and their honour, not suffered as the fruit of the revolutionary Khilafat propaganda which Mr. Gandhi encouraged and blessed? What did not the thousands of peaceful and honourable citizens of Bombay suffer at the hands of Mr. Gandhi's lambs and the mob law which they temporarily established? What of Madras now, where men and boys who commit mean and cowardly assaults, tell their victims to proclaim that they were committed by Mr. Gandhi's followers. So sure are they of some sophistry which will excuse their malpractices? What of "the unseen terror" which, on the verdict on Mr. Bipinchandra Pal, the Non-co-operators established in Calcutta? What of Malegaon? When Mr. Gandhi says that India has not suffered enough, what is it but a wretched euphemism for the belief that he has not yet power enough. True, he has not suffered what some of his misguided followers have suffered; but the sum and total of all their sufferings, deliberately courted be it marked, from a poor pretence of martyrdom, is a mere fraction of the awful sufferings of the Hindu population of Malabar whose lot fails to stir either Mr. Gandhi or many of his countrymen. There is nothing in Mr. Gandhi's attitude at this Conference which in the least surprises those who have followed his activities. When the last shred of pretence had been stripped from the mantle of moderation, which

Mr. Gandhi would have liked to assume in order to bemuse men of sober opinion and experience of affairs, they proceeded to build constitutional castles on the running sand of Mr. Gandhi's co-operation.

On the one side is the Government, entrusted with the solemn duty of maintaining law and order in this land. That is a duty it dares not disregard for a moment, however unpleasant it may be to divert from constructive work the energies requisite for its discharge. On the other side is Mr. Gandhi bent on subverting law and order, wilfully blind to the sufferings he has caused, wilfully blind to the infinitely greater suffering he is bound to cause if allowed scope. Between these two forces there is an element of people, of whom one would like to speak with respect, for they are men with honourable records, wavering because they cannot or will not see the inevitable, the bloody destructiveness of revolution. Mr. Gandhi is the one great enemy of peace, the arch fomentor of revolution. His character cannot obscure those irresistible facts. The Government must either use, in the interests of this land, all the powers with which it is armed in order to suppress revolution or abdicate.

While the Anglo-Indian Press was thus resolutely hostile, there were rumblings of discontent within our own ranks and on 20 January 1922, I received the following letter from Vijayaraghavachariar, the veteran Congressman of Salem, who enjoyed high reputation for frankness and integrity.

I am quite sure that you are now much wiser than during the last days of December when I so earnestly begged of you and Mahatmaji not to have anything whatever to do with the very fantastical and very disquieting idea of the Round Table Conference with the powers that be. I want you to give me the benefit of your present reflections on the whole business. There can be no doubt that Malaviyaji, yourself and several others were actuated by lofty motives. But all your noble efforts have brought about a national misfortune. The letter of Sir C. Shankaran Nair and his conduct have inflicted a deep injury on the great national cause. Not only are the Anglo-Indian press and the bureaucracy jubilant in consequence but also he inspired some of our countrymen in both the houses of our Parliament to follow his example. How much better we and the cause so much at our heart would have been, if the unfortunate Conference at Bombay had not taken place, is for you and Mahatmaji and others who co-operated with you to think and declare. For my part, I am in deep and acute distress. The mournful recollection that I not only kept away from this midsummer madness—you will now pardon me for saying so—but also tried my utmost to dissuade you all from it, is no personal consolation at all. Let us all humbly pray to merciful Providence to forgive us this rapid

and rash judgment. It may be that out of this evil some good would arise. But I have never subscribed to such a doctrine or to the morality of it when the evil, unlike that of a volcano, has been brought about by our own efforts.

I wonder what next Malaviyaji would do. Would he join us in toto? I prayerfully hope he would.

Gandhi wrote in *Young India* three articles in connection with this conference, the first of which appeared on 19 January 1922 under the heading "The Malaviya Conference" as follows:

The Conference was both a success and a failure. It was a success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended, to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought under one roof people possessing divergent views. It was a failure in that, though certain resolutions have been adopted, the Conference did not leave on my mind the impression that those who assembled together as a whole realised the gravity of the real issue. The mind of the Conference seemed to be centred more on a Round Table Conference than upon asserting the popular right of free speech, free association and free press.

I agreed to advise the Working Committee to postpone general Mass Civil Disobedience contemplated by the Congress to the 31st instant, in order to enable the Committee and the Conference to enter into negotiations with the Government. I further undertook to advise the Committee, in the event of the proposed Conference coming off, to stop all hartals pending the Conference. This I hold to be inevitable.

But whilst our activities should be zealously continued, there should be greatest restraint exercised and every trace of violence or discourtesy avoided. When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible. Civil Disobedience being an indefatigable right, the preparations for it will continue even if the Conference comes off e.g. the enlistment of volunteers.

I do consider the idea of the Conference for devising the scheme of full Swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed but not prolonged enough for the object in view. She has to go through greater discipline. But if the Viceroy or a party desires a Conference, it would be foolish for Non-co-operators not to respond.

Referring to the withdrawal of Sir Sankaran Nair from the Conference, Gandhi observed:

This was an unfortunate incident. In my opinion he had nothing

to do with me or other opinions. As Speaker, especially he was exempt from any implied or express identification with anybody's views. I cannot help feeling that Sir Shankaran erred in the conception of his duty as Speaker. But as we progress towards democracy, we must be prepared even for such erroneous exercise of independence. I congratulate Sir Shankaran Nair upon his boldly exercising his independence, which I have not hesitated to call cussedness in private conversation, and the Committee upon its independence, in not suffering a nervous collapse but quietly electing Sir Visvesvaraya and voting thanks to the retiring Speaker for the services rendered.

Later, on the advice of Gandhi, the Congress Working Committee passed on 17 January five resolutions relating to the decision of the representative Conference. The resolutions were as follows:

The Working Committee places on record its thanks to Pandit Malaviya and his fellow conveners for convening the Conference of persons belonging to the various political parties in the country, for the purpose of considering the existing tension, and, having considered the Resolutions of the Conference, the Committee resolves that the offensive Civil Disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress be not started till the 31st day of January 1922 or pending the result of the negotiations undertaken by the Committee of the Malaviya Conference for a Round Table Conference, whichever may be the first date.

The Working Committee considers it necessary for the purpose of creating an atmosphere favourable for a successful Round Table Conference that:

- a) All notifications and Notices declaring illegal and prohibiting the formation of Volunteer Corps, public meetings, picketing and other normal activities of the Congress or the Khilafat Committees be withdrawn and prisoners undergoing prosecution or conviction in respect of such notices be discharged or released as the case may be.
- b) All Fatwa prisoners including the Ali Brothers and their companions be released.
- c) All other prisoners already convicted or under trial for non-violent or other innocent activities be dealt with and discharged in the manner appointed therefor in the 3rd Resolution of the Conference and,
- d) Simultaneously with the performance of the foregoing acts by the Government concerned and in the event of a Round Table Conference being called and pending such Conference, all hartals, picketing and Civil Disobedience should cease.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding about the Congress demands, the Working Committee desires to draw the attention of the Committee

appointed by the Malaviya Conference to the Khilafat, the Punjab and the Swaraj claims as stated publicly from time to time from Congress platforms and to state that therefore the Congress and the Khilafat representatives will be bound to demand full settlement of the three claims.

These resolutions communicated to me by Vallabhbhai Patel on 17 January were later on 18 January along with the Resolutions of Malaviya Conference sent by wire to the Private Secretary of the Viceroy with a note as stated above, offering to supply further elucidation if so desired.

This communication was later followed by another telegram about 27 December as follows:

In continuation of our letter sixteenth confirming telegram of same date transmitting the text of resolutions passed at Representative Conference held in Bombay on 14th and 15th January we beg to submit, for His Excellency's information, following observations regarding composition and proceedings of Conference, which may be helpful in appreciating real significance of work done at Conference. The Conference was called at very short notice in view of its urgency and invitations were sent to 350 persons of note in Indian politics, including several members of Indian and Provincial Legislatures. Number of those who attended the Conference was more than 300. Different communities Hindu, Mohammedan, Parsi, Christian, and Anglo-Indian were represented. This fact contributed to weight of debate. Letters and messages were received from several others sympathising with object of Conference and wishing it success. As illustrating the care with which the invitations were issued, it might be mentioned that many persons who wished to be present were not admitted to the Conference, because the object of the conveners was not to hold a political demonstration but to take counsel with the leaders and workers of all parties on burning questions of the hour. Votes were called for only as a means of indicating general trend of opinion among members, on several resolutions considered by Conference and not for measuring exact strength of numbers supporting each of them. At request of conveners, Sir Sankaran Nair kindly came down from Indore to guide proceedings of Conference as Speaker. He presided at public session of Conference on the 14th and throughout Committee stage on the 15th. Before Conference resumed its session, however, he, for reasons into which it is needless to go here, relinquished the Chair.

Thereafter Conference resumed session with Sir Visvesvaraya as Speaker. Representatives of non-co-operation movement and leader Mr. Gandhi were present throughout proceedings. Mr. Gandhi also attended, by invitation, meeting of Committee appointed to consider

resolutions. Non-co-operators and particularly Mr. Gandhi took part in discussions but abstained, in consequence of his creed, from voting on resolutions.

In speech on December 21 last which Viceroy addressed to Calcutta deputation, His Excellency observed that he had no assurance from leaders who were responsible for non-co-operation activities, that those activities would cease, if Conference were convened. "I deeply regret" said His Excellency "that those are not the present conditions, and discussion which I thought was to have proceeded, on high level of patriotic desire by temporary mutual concession and forbearance, to the finding of solution of India's present problems, takes form, in its present aspect, of request to Government to abandon action which has led, or, as we believe, forced Government to take such action, would also cease."

In view of these requirements, the Bombay Conference passed Resolution 3, which has been given final shape in Committee after discussion with Mr. Gandhi. In accordance with understanding arrived at with him at the Conference, Working Committee of Congress subsequently passed separate resolution to similar effect. Working Committee has decided that simultaneously with performance of certain acts by Governments concerned, and in the event of Round Table Conference being called and pending such Conference, all hartals, picketing, and Civil Disobedience should cease. Conference in formulating resolutions endeavoured, as far as possible, to secure substantial compliance with conditions defined by His Excellency in Calcutta speech. Committee apprehend actual wording of resolutions framed, under pressure of time, may not adequately convey extent to which endeavour has succeeded in securing atmosphere of conciliation. Committee hopes, that on Government side, terms would be regarded as sufficient. Committee is convinced that there is earnest desire on part of all sections of public to find real solution of the problems facing country and that Conference resolutions constitute distinct advance towards fulfilment of that object.

We venture to submit that Conference has effected real improvement in political situation. So far as they have gone, pourparlers have in Committee's opinion advanced quite as satisfactorily as may be reasonably expected, having regard to exceptional circumstances of present times. Further development of negotiations can only be undertaken with advantage, not by correspondence or open Conference, but by informal and confidential consultations. That was the reason why in telegram to His Excellency, Committee suggested deputation of three of its members to wait on His Excellency at Delhi. Committee believes that with mutual sympathy and good-will, it will not be difficult to adjust needs of situation, by confidential Conferences and conversations till preliminaries are arranged to satisfaction of all parties. Mr. Gandhi and Working Committee of Congress have undertaken to postpone Civil

Disobedience till 31st of January with express object of facilitating conduct of negotiations.

Under ordinary conditions many flaws may be detected in understanding reached so far, and many reasons found to stave off action, but we are persuaded that His Excellency will approach question, to use his own words, in a large and generous spirit and that no advantage or triumph would be claimed on either side and no reproach should be made by anyone either of having been forced to yield or of not having courage to proceed with campaign.

Public are anxious to see the country started on career of permanent progress by development of natural resources and increasing utilisation of intelligence and energy of its people. Of this at present they see no signs. The Reforms have not, as was at one time fondly hoped, ushered in new era in this respect. Need of immediate and large constitutional expansion is felt on all hands. Trade and industry are disorganized. Public mind is greatly agitated and dissatisfaction is entering new and acute phase. So long as large numbers of trusted leaders and citizens are confined in prisons, it is useless to expect peace, and delay in dealing with situation may increase unrest and accelerate crisis.

Request for Round Table Conference was first put forward by Calcutta deputation. Bombay Conference representing many shades of opinion, has now endorsed request. Non-co-operators are not opposed to it, and Mr. Gandhi, their leader, is willing to attend Conference in individual capacity, without any terms. All parties in country are thus agreed as to necessity of Round Table Conference. His Excellency the Viceroy has expressed himself in its favour and Committee considers that great advance has already been made towards fulfilment of preliminary conditions which His Excellency considered were essential. It now rests with His Excellency to give indication of the attitude he is prepared to take with reference to suggestion made in this letter and to claim from public all further co-operation necessary to realise common object.

Jinnah
Jayakar
Natarajan
Secretaries (Malabar Hill)

To this, the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy replied as follows, by his letter of 26 January.

'In continuation of my telegrams of 18th and 19th instant I am directed by His Excellency the Viceroy to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 18th January communicating the terms of the Resolutions passed by the representative Conference held at Bombay.

In reply I am directed to say that His Excellency regrets that the proposals now put forward should have been regarded by those who

subscribed to the Resolution as a response to the sentiments which the Viceroy expressed at Calcutta. His Excellency has considered these proposals but is unable to discover in them the basis for profitable discussion on the subject of a Round Table Conference. No useful purpose would therefore be served by entering into any detailed examination of their terms.

Thereupon the Committee sent the following telegram on 30 January to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy.

Your letter of 26th January received today. Our letter wired to you on the 27th (December) gives our reasons for regarding proposals put forward as substantial response to sentiments expressed by His Excellency at Calcutta. Committee are anxious to know why His Excellency is unable to discover in them basis for profitable discussion on the subject of Round Table Conference. Committee will be grateful to know *which terms of Conference proposals are not acceptable, because Committee in that case will endeavour to meet His Excellency's wishes.* Committee strongly feel present conditions most favourable for discussion and settlement in view of seriousness of situation, venture to request His Excellency to re-consider the matter.

Jinnah
Jayakar
Natarajan

On the same day the Committee sent to Gandhi the following letter:

We are sending you herewith for your private information a copy of a reply received today from His Excellency the Viceroy and also copy of our letter sent to him by wire, asking for a re-consideration of the matter. The Committee is of opinion that these communications should not be published just at present. The Committee request you, pending further communication probably in about three days' time, kindly to postpone your programme at Bardoli.

It will be interesting to note the progress of events during this time and Gandhi's threat, time after time, not to wait long enough for the Viceroy to consider the situation and find out a remedy. The following entries in my diary will be found interesting as throwing light on the situation.

Friday, 27 January 1922: Meeting of Conference Committee 6-45. Besides the usual business Hormasji Wadia and Justice Sheshgiri Aivar

attended. Draft letter to Viceroy settled and resolved to send by wire. (This has been quoted above.) Besides opinion expressed that we should call Round Table Conference in case the Viceroy refuses.

Saturday, 28 January: Meeting of Conference with Gandhi from 9 to 12 a.m. and again from 6-30 to 8-30 p.m. Gandhi threatens Mass Civil Disobedience. Jinnah and I trying to persuade him to postpone it pending Viceroy's reply. I am doing my best to induce him to do so. He refuses but it appears that it would not begin till 15th of February. (Subsequent events proved that this was a vain hope.)

Monday, 30 January: Worked on Committee's affairs. Meeting at 5 about Conference. Disappointing reply from Viceroy (quoted above). Resolved to send wire (quoted above) asking what terms he desired, assuring him that Gandhi working in alliance with us.

Tuesday, 31 January: Meeting of Committee at 5-30 p.m. On this day expired Gandhi's time limit. Anxiously awaiting for events.

Wednesday, 1 February: Committee meeting at 6-30. Received Gandhi's minatory ultimatum to Viceroy. We thought it was very discourteously worded. It looked as if other Congressmen had a hand in it because it is so unlike the gentle humility and forbearance of Gandhi. Committee much upset by this ultimatum, especially Hormasji Wadia who burst out in strong terms. I had great difficulty in restraining him.

The ultimatum, as it was called, which Gandhi sent to the Viceroy was the most eventful step of the time.

Before it was sent it appears that Gandhi visited Bardoli and on January 29, (while the negotiations of the Malaviya Conference with the Viceroy were going on) the people of Bardoli took a momentous decision to launch Mass Civil Disobedience. Vithalbhai Patel presided over a Conference of the representatives of the Taluk and made a speech containing a warning. There was an audience of Khaddar-clad representatives numbering 4,000 including 500 women. As Gandhi later observed: "They understood the implications of Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian unity. They realised the significance and the truth of non-violence. They saw what the removal of untouchability meant; they were prepared, not merely to take to national schools but to induce the untouchable to join them." Gandhi thus satisfied himself that the conditions of Mass Civil Disobedience were understood by the people and lastly they were ready to face imprisonment and even death if necessary, and they could do all this without restraint.

Having thus fully understood and considered the conditions as essential for the starting of Mass Civil Disobedience, the inhabitants of Bardoli resolved:

This Conference hopes that the Bardoli Taluka will have the privilege to be the first for the aforesaid sacrifice, and this Conference respectfully informs the Working Committee that, unless the Working Committee otherwise decides or unless the proposed Round Table Conference is held, this Taluk will immediately commence Mass Civil Disobedience under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji and the President of the Conference.

The Conference further recommended that those tax-payers of the Taluk who were ready and willing to abide by the necessary conditions would refrain, till further instructions, from paying land revenue and other taxes due to the Government.

The Working Committee of the Congress met later on January 30 at Surat and authorised the people of Bardoli to start the campaign. The Committee advised all other parts of India to co-operate in the Bardoli *Satyagraha* by refraining from mass or individual Civil Disobedience of aggressive character, except upon the express consent of Gandhiji previously obtained.

The period of the postponement of the struggle expired on the 31st. Gandhi would no longer wait and in the teeth of opposition from the Secretaries of the Malaviya Conference, he declared that Bardoli's determination was final and irrevocable. His "ultimatum" to Lord Reading sent on 1 February was as follows:

Bardoli is a small *tahsil* in the Surat District in the Bombay Presidency, having a population of about 87,000 all told.

On the 29th *ultimo*, it decided under the presidency of Vithalbhai Patel to embark on mass Civil disobedience, having proved its fitness for it in terms of the resolution of the All-India-Congress Committee which met at Delhi during the first week of November last. But, as I am perhaps chiefly responsible for Bardoli's decision, I owe it to Your Excellency and the public to explain the situation under which the decision has been taken.

It was intended under the Resolution of the All-India Congress Committee before referred to, to make the district of Bardoli the first unit for mass Civil disobedience in order to mark the national revolt against the Government of India for its consistently criminal refusal to appro-

ciate India's just resolve regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and Swaraj.

Then followed the unfortunate and regrettable rioting in Bombay on the 17th November last, resulting in the postponement of the step contemplated by Bardoli.

Meanwhile, repression of virulent type has taken place, with the concurrence of the Government of India, in Bengal, Assam, United Provinces, the Punjab, the Province of Delhi, and, in a way, in Bihar and Orissa and elsewhere. I know that you have objected to the use of the word 'repression' for describing the action of the authorities in those provinces. In my opinion, when action is taken which is in excess of the requirements of a situation, it is undoubtedly repression. The looting of property, assaults on innocent people, the brutal treatment of prisoners in the jails including flogging, can in no sense be described as legal, civilized or in any way necessary. This official lawlessness cannot be described by any other term but lawless repression. Intimidation by Non-co-operators or their sympathizers to a certain extent in connection with hartals and picketing may be admitted, but in no case can it be held to justify the wholesale suppression of peaceful volunteering or equally peaceful public meetings under a distorted use of an extraordinary law which was passed in order to deal with activities which were manifestly violent both in intention and action, nor is it possible to designate, as otherwise than repression, action taken against innocent people under what has appeared to many of us an illegal use of the ordinary law, nor again can be administrative interference with the liberty of the press under a law that is under promise of repeal be regarded as anything but repression.

The immediate task before the country, therefore, is to rescue, from paralysis, freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of the press. In the present mood of the Government of India and in the present unprepared state of the country in respect of complete control of the forces of violence, Non-co-operators were unwilling to have anything to do with the Malaviya Conference, whose object was to induce Your Excellency to convene a Round Table Conference. But as I was anxious to avoid all avoidable suffering, I had no hesitation in advising the Working Committee of the Congress to accept the recommendations of that Conference. Although in my opinion the terms were quite in keeping with your own requirements, as I understood them through your Calcutta speech and otherwise, you have summarily rejected the proposal.

In the circumstances, there is nothing before the country but to adopt some non-violent method for the enforcement of its demands, including the elementary rights of free speech, free association and free press. In my humble opinion, the recent events are a clear departure from the civilized policy laid down by Your Excellency at the time of the generous, manly and unconditional apology of the Ali brothers, namely, the

Government should not interfere with the activities of Non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. Had the Government's policy remained neutral and allowed public opinion to ripen and have its full effect, it would have been possible to advise postponement of mass civil disobedience of an aggressive type till the Congress had acquired fuller control over the forces of violence in the country and enforced greater discipline among the millions of its adherents. But this lawless repression, unparalleled in the history of this unfortunate country has made the immediate adoption of civil disobedience an imperative duty. The Working Committee of the Congress has restricted it to only certain areas to be selected by me from time to time, and at present it is confined only to Bardoli. I may, under the said authority, give my consent at once in respect of a group of hundred villages in Guntur in the Madras Presidency, provided they can strictly conform to the conditions of non-violence, unity among different classes, the adoption and manufacture of hand-spun Khadi, and untouchability.

But before the people of Bardoli actually commence mass civil disobedience, I would respectfully urge you, as head of the Government of India, finally to revise your policy and set free all the non-co-operating prisoners who are convicted or under trial for non-violent activities, and to declare in clear terms a policy of absolute non-interference with all non-violent activities in the country, whether they be regarding the redress of the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs or Swaraj or any other purpose and even though they fall under the repressive sections of the Penal Code or the Criminal Procedure Code or other repressive laws, subject always to the conditions of non-violence. I would further urge you to free the press from all administrative control and to restore all the fines and forfeitures recently imposed. In thus urging, I am asking Your Excellency to do what is being done today in every country which is deemed to be under civilised government. If you can see your way to make the necessary declaration within seven days of the date of publication of this manifesto, I shall be prepared to advise postponement of civil disobedience of an aggressive character, till the imprisoned workers have, after their discharge, reviewed the situation and considered the position *de novo*. If the Government make the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

To Gandhi's letter (quoted above) sending the ultimatum

for the information of the Malaviya Conference Committee, it sent the following reply to Gandhi on 2 February 1922.

Dear Mahatmaji,

The Committee are in receipt of your letter of Tuesday night, addressed to Mr. Jayakar, one of the signatories, and the copy of your letter to the Viceroy. They regret that you should have thought it advisable to send this letter to the Viceroy, while you were aware, from the copies of the letter from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy and the Committee's reply thereto, sent to you, that correspondence was still going on on the subject of the Round Table Conference. The Committee cannot agree that your letter either meets their requirements or is unexceptionable as you say in your letter.

Yours sincerely
M. A. Jinnah
M. R. Jayakar
K. Natarajan

In the meanwhile, the Committee received the following communication from the Viceroy's Private Secretary, with reference to their telegram of 27 January (quoted above.)

*Viceroy's Lodge,
Delhi,
January 27, 1922.*

Dear Sirs,

I am desired to acknowledge receipt of your telegram of today's date, which has been placed before H. E. the Viceroy.

Yours faithfully

. . .
Asst. Private Secretary
to the Viceroy.

Though no reply had been received from the Viceroy upto this time, the Government issued on 6 February a communique refusing all the demands made by Gandhi. There was a paragraph in that communique animadverting on the proposals put forward by the Malaviya Conference. The Committee, therefore, thought it incumbent on them to place before the public the following statement dealing with this part of the Government's communique relating to the Conference proposals. The statement was issued to the Press later on 12 February.

Paragraph 4 in the Government Communique of 6-2-1922

was as follows:

It remains for the Government of India to deal with the allegation that His Excellency summarily rejected the proposal for a conference, although the terms put forward by the Conference at Bombay and accepted by the Working Committee of the Congress were quite in keeping with His Excellency's own requirements, as indicated in his speech at Calcutta. How far this is from being the case will be manifest from a comparison of His Excellency's speech with the terms proposed by the Conference. His Excellency in that speech insisted on the imperative necessity of a fundamental condition precedent to the discussion of any question of a conference of the discontinuance of unlawful activities of the Non-co-operation Party. No assurance on this point was, however, contained in the proposals advanced by the Conference. On the contrary, while the Government were asked to make concessions, which not only included the withdrawal of the notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment and Seditious meetings Acts and the release of persons convicted of offences designed to affect the loyalty of the armed forces and the submission to an arbitration Committee of the cases of other persons convicted under ordinary law of the land, there was no suggestion that any of the illegal activities of the Non-co-operators other than hartals, picketing and civil disobedience would cease. Moreover, it was evident from the statements made by Mr. Gandhi at the Conference that he intended to continue the enrolment of volunteers in prohibited Associations and preparations for civil disobedience. Further, Mr. Gandhi also made it apparent that the proposed Round Table Conference should be called merely to register his decrees. It is idle to suggest that terms of this character fulfil in any way the essentials laid down by His Excellency or can reasonably be described as having been made in response to the sentiments expressed by him.

The Conference Committee observed with reference to this part of the Government communique as follows:

No assurance on this point (discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party) was, however, contained in the proposals advanced by the Conference. In the very next sentence, however, it was admitted that there was the assurance that hartals, picketing and civil disobedience would cease. These have all along been considered as the principal offensive activities of the non-co-operationist and the fact that the resolution of the Conference provided for their cessation does not bear out the Government's statement that no assurance on this point was contained in the proposals of the conference.

The only other activities specified in the communique, to which exception has been taken, is the enrolment of volunteers in prohibited

associations and preparation for civil disobedience. It was part of the proposal of the Conference that the notification prohibiting these associations should be withdrawn and when this was done, enrolment of volunteers for them could no longer be illegal. If, after that, they were engaged in any unlawful activity by way of preparation for civil disobedience or otherwise, they would be liable for their actions under the ordinary law.

It will thus be seen that, in respect of all the important offensive activities of the Non-co-operators, the Conference had secured the promise of cessation simultaneously with the reversal of the repressive policy of Government.

Then it is said that Mr. Gandhi made it apparent that the proposed Round Table Conference would be called merely to register his decrees. The Conference obviously cannot be held responsible for anything outside its resolutions. But as to this inference from the appearance of what Mr. Gandhi said or did at the Conference, it is relevant to cite the following from a note to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, in which Mr. Gandhi has explained his real meaning. It was read by Mr. Seshagiri Iyer in his speech at the Legislative Assembly: "What I mean is that until I am convinced that my demands are unreasonable, unjust or impossible of fulfilment, I would not recede from them. I would not consider the unwillingness of the Government or Parliament to grant any of these things to be a ground for reducing the demands. The value of a Round Table Conference consists in understanding each other's difficulties and of making allowances for them. Hence my insisting that Government must change their heart. If they entrench themselves behind their armed forces, the Conference would be not only fruitless but mischievous. They must try to appeal to our intellect, just as we must appeal to theirs. If the Government or anybody, therefore, shows that any particular demand is unreasonable or untenable, I would certainly give it up as I did yesterday on the question of the motion of securing the release of political prisoners other than the two classes mentioned in Resolution No. 3 of the Conference.

It may be added that though Mr. Gandhi in the speech at the Conference said volunteering would continue, he qualified it by saying that "the preparation will not be of an offensive character nor of a hostile character." He explained this further in an article in *Young India*.

The Committee cannot help thinking that these and other points might most suitably have been communicated to them in response to their request of the 30th of January in reply to the letter from the Viceroy's Private Secretary. The Committee regrets the omission of Government to do so in a direct manner, because its task of endeavouring to secure a peaceful atmosphere in which to consider the questions arising out of the present situation, has been thereby rendered more difficult than

it would otherwise have been.

In the meanwhile the anxiety of the Committee caused by the omission of the Viceroy to reply to their letters and telegrams increased and the Committee was very anxious to confer with Gandhi in Bombay. Several letters were written requesting him to be present in Bombay, of which I shall only cite two important ones; a letter dated 26 January from Ambalal Sarabhai of Ahmedabad, who, as stated above, was actively co-operating with the Conference. We thought it desirable that Ambalal should intercede, because of his great influence at Ahmedabad, with the Congress Committee there and with Gandhi himself. He addressed the following telegram to Shankarlal Banker at Ahmedabad.

Important business—Gandhi's presence here necessary Saturday. We request to see him—wire reply—Ambalal.

To similar effect were my telegrams to Malaviya on 30 and 31 January, desiring his presence in Bombay immediately, as matters were reaching a critical stage. While we were thus waiting, wondering why the Viceroy was delaying his reply, the following letter was sent to us, as we learnt later, but that letter never reached us as will appear from what follows.

*Viceroy's Lodge,
Delhi.
7th February 1922*

From

The Private Secretary to H. E. the Viceroy

To

The Honorary Secretaries,
Representative Conference,
Bombay.

Sirs,

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your telegram of the 30th of January (then it quotes the contents of the telegram already stated above.)

In reply, I am desired to refer you to the communique of the Government of India of the 6th of February, (already quoted above). For reasons explained therein, His Excellency is of opinion that the proposals of your Conference, which are substantially identical with those of the Working Committee of the Congress, in no way fulfil the essentials laid down by His Excellency in his speech at Calcutta and he

must adhere to the view that they cannot reasonably be described as having been made in response to the sentiments then expressed by him. His Excellency appreciates the statement that your Committee will endeavour to meet his wishes in regard to any terms which are not regarded as acceptable, but, in view of the attitude taken up by Mr. Gandhi, in his manifesto of the 4th of February (ultimatum), His Excellency considers that any further discussion in present conditions of a Round Table Conference would serve no purpose.

This letter makes clear that the Government took advantage of Gandhi's ultimatum to end all the negotiations, although they knew that the Conference, which had initiated these negotiations, had nothing to do with Gandhi's ultimatum. In fact, it was issued by Gandhi in defiance of their wishes. Curiously enough, this letter of 7 February never reached the Committee. It is most extraordinary that an important communication proceeding from no less a person than the Viceroy, despatched on 7 February from his office, should have been returned to it by the Post Office authorities as undelivered. And yet, this is as much as was stated by the Viceroy's Private Secretary in his subsequent letter of 24 February 1922, as follows:

*Viceroy's Lodge,
Delhi,
February 24, 1922.*

My Dear Mr. Jinnah

The enclosed letter, viz., the one of the 7th of February, 1922 (just quoted above) addressed to the Hony. Secretaries of the Representative Conference at Bombay and despatched on the 7th of February, has just been returned to me by the Post Office authorities as undelivered.

It is very regrettable that this letter failed to reach you or one of the other Secretaries, who signed the letter to which it is a reply. I hope that you will explain the facts to the persons concerned.

Yours Sincerely
Private Secretary
to Viceroy.

It is unnecessary to make any comments on the alleged failure of this letter to reach us and on the consequences of such a mishap on the prospect of the Round Table Conference, and so the matter ended.

Immediately after the ultimatum was delivered, in defiance of the wishes of the promoters of the Conference Gandhi wrote

to me the following letter on 31 January.

Dear Mr. Jayakar,

You will see my letter to the Viceroy. It is being posted to him tomorrow. I am going to delay publication till the 4th. That meets your requirements also. I did not think I could do more. I hope you will find the letter unexceptionable; it gives the Viceroy more than he could possibly require. He need not call the Round Table Conference. The more I think of it the more clear it is to me that he cannot call the Conference. But he could easily adopt my suggestion, if he wishes to.

To this letter of the Mahatma I wrote a reply as follows:

1st February 1922.

Dear Mahatmaji,

I am in receipt of your letter dated last Tuesday night, i.e. the 31st ultimo and also of the copy of your letter to the Viceroy containing your ultimatum. You will allow me to say that the letter has disappointed me very much. It is not in your usual style—high dignity and deep humility. In many places it is excessively minatory and contains many *obiter dicta*, which weakens its firmness. I am sure, if I had been by your side when you drafted or posted your letter, I would certainly have convinced you that it was better to wait a little longer until our correspondence with the Viceroy had ended; or, if that was not possible, I would certainly have induced you to alter its unfortunate phrasing in many places. In our contact during the Punjab Enquiry, you taught me many lessons of great moral value, which I ever recall with gratitude. But the most important of them all was the accuracy of your diction and the faultless propriety of your sentiments in more than the conventional sense. I must say with great respect to you that, judged by the high test to which you often mercilessly subject your utterances, this memorable document, which you have written to the Viceroy, is sadly deficient. Heaven alone knows what its consequences will be. You know my strong sentiments against mass civil disobedience and this is no place for repeating them. I wish you all success in your awful venture. But I do still hope that, at the last moment, it may be made possible to turn away by offering you the price which you stipulated the last time we met here. You then stated—and I shall hold you to your word—that if some of the conveners and their friends, similarly minded, would promise to offer resistance if the citizens' right of free association and free speech in an atmosphere of perfect non-violence is threatened in Bombay, then you would withdraw from resorting to this evil weapon. Some of us are trying our best to make this step possible in Bombay and we are

not yet without hope that even this price, which you have demanded, it may be possible to offer you at the very last moment before it is too late. I cannot help shuddering at the prospect of the misery and suffering which we may thus be able eventually to save. That alone is a sufficient reason for working in the direction you have suggested and if we attain any success, you will soon hear from me. In the meanwhile, I am with affectionate regards,

Yours sincerely
M. R. Jayakar

On 3 February 1923, Jinnah and I wired to Gandhi as follows:

Your presence necessary here about Monday next. Committee considering proposals sent this morning.

Jinnah Jayakar

It was a feat to get Jinnah to agree to join me in sending this telegram to Gandhi. The situation as it developed at this time, after the delivery of the ultimatum, is well described in my diary entries:

Monday, 6 February: Issued statement to Press about correspondence with Viceroy about Round Table Conference. Committee meeting—heated discussion about Gandhi's ultimatum.

Tuesday, 7 February: Committee meeting at 6-30. Malaviya arrived today. Conference with him and Natarajan from 1-30 to 6-30. Seshagiri Iyer present for part of the time.

Wednesday, 8 February: Committee sitting. My tiff with Jinnah about his hard attitude against Gandhi. We all agreed that Jinnah makes manifest too often his strong dislike of Gandhi.

Thursday, 9 February: Gandhi in Bombay on invitation from us. Spent nearly whole day in Conference with him. The result of the Gorakhpur riot (Chauri Chaura) has brought down Gandhi from his high pedestal and we found him pliant and willing not only to postpone mass civil disobedience but also to drop nearly all forms of provocative activities. I noted down certain terms on which he and the Committee had agreed and I gave those terms to him. He is as honest as usual and admitted them. Jinnah and Wadia's treatment of Gandhi was most discourteous, but he replied with great veneration especially to Wadia. Gandhi has invited me to go to Bardoli and see preparations for civil disobedience there.

I must not leave this part of the narrative without making a reference to Gandhi's letter to me, of 6 February, giving an

explanation of his action in sending the ultimatum to the Viceroy.

*Bardoli,
6th February 1922.*

Dear Mr. Jayakar,

I have received your letter and your telegram also. I observe that my action in writing to the Viceroy has not pleased the Committee. I am sorry. I thought that I was careful enough if I did not start civil disobedience for nearly a fortnight. I did not understand that it was not right even to write to the Viceroy. I purposely waited for three days before publishing the letter as was your desire.

I have been most careful too regarding what should, in my opinion, be done by those who sympathise with the prisoners and with the objects of the movement. Please convey this to the Secretaries of the Conference.

Yours sincerely
M. K. Gandhi

In loyal Congress circles, this failure did not cause much disappointment and in illustration of this I am quoting the published sentiments of a loyal Congress historian whom I had occasion to refer to on previous occasions. His comment was:

The Congress did not regret the result as the Congress fully shared Gandhi's belief that Government had not done its worst and the country had not shown its best in the new line of suffering and civil resistance, and it was premature to enter into a settlement.

This feeling stood in strong contrast to the dismay which was felt among another class of Congressmen, who, though loyal to Gandhi were anxious to see a settlement arrived at. As typical of this feeling I am quoting from a letter of the Indian leader, Satyamurti, who remained throughout his life, a loyal Congressman but who had co-operated to the fullest extent with the Malaviya Conference in all its stages. On 3 February, 1922, he wrote to me as follows:

I reached here this morning. I hope our Committee will have issued, by the time this letter reaches you, the statement of the three points mentioned at the Conference. I am very anxious it should be done and done without any delay. I feel very strongly on the matter. Please do write to me at once.

You may always command me whenever my services are required in connection with the Round Table Conference.

Not content with this, on the very next day, he sent me the following telegram:

I respectfully urge Committee promptly publish statement disapproving Mahatma's letter to Viceroy, deprecating starting Mass Civil Disobedience and regretting Viceroy's non-possumus attitude.

In the meanwhile, on 5 February occurred an incident which had disastrous results upon Gandhi's proposals to start Civil Disobedience at Bardoli. This is how the incident was described by the Congress Press.

The ultimatum and the rejoinder were sent from Bardoli where Gandhi had gone to lead the campaign. The country was agog. Scarcely had the rejoinder been despatched, when on February 8, the morning papers conveyed the news of disturbances on the 5th instant at Chauri Chaura, a village in Gorakhpur District, U. P. During a procession at Chauri Chura, or rather after the procession had passed, some stragglers were interfered with and abused by the Constables. Trouble started and the Constables opened fire and, when they exhausted their ammunition, they retired to the *Thana*. The mob set fire to the *Thana*, where 22 Constables were burnt alive. Gandhi was profoundly shocked.

On Gandhi's invitation as stated above, I left for Bardoli on the 10th to see the preparations there as Gandhi had desired. This was to me a very important episode of the time and I am quoting below a few entries from my diary to give a faithful picture of this visit.

Friday, 10 February: Left for Bardoli by night train with Malaviya and Natarajan.

Saturday, 11 February: Reached Surat at 6 in the morning. Stopped and had bath and tea in a house near station. Left for Bardoli by 8-30. Collector Martin was in the same compartment. During the journey, he explained to us facts and figures showing Bardoli was not really ready as Gandhi thinks. At every station, we saw European Police ready for the scuffle. The atmosphere looked charged with feeling that Gandhi would be taken away if he resolved on Civil Disobedience.

Met Gandhi at Bardoli. Read drafts admirably setting out points of details discussed at meetings with Committee, which we attended

and spoke by invitation of Gandhi. We met the Working Committee also. Gandhi invited us to be present throughout. Jammalal Bajaj spoke contra. Kelkar came out with his usual darts against Gandhi. A Mohammadan Congressman Jaun Ahmed Shivale was more honest in opposition. We then got Working Committee to discuss. Bomanji was living at Bardoli most luxuriously in a mango-grove in a Railway compartment beautifully equipped with comforts. He gave me an excellent lunch which included ices at the end. The only thing which seemed to be wanting was caviar and oysters. I taxed him that, during intervals between such excellent meals, he was advising the poor peasants to withhold the payment of taxes and go to jail. This was monstrous. He said nothing in reply.

After the session of the Working Committee we had discussion with Bomanji who had assumed lead of the no tax movement. Had long talks with him and other friends. Vallabhbhai Patel was most honestly opposed. Vitthalbhai Patel was astute and deceptive. Left Bardoli at 6 with the Resolutions which were passed. Reached Surat. Left by 9-15 train for Bombay. Feeling gradually getting strong against what was regarded as Gandhi's *volte-face*. His withdrawal will strain his popularity to the utmost.

The Congress Working Committee in its Session on 11 and 12 February at Bardoli passed the following Resolutions stopping the Civil Disobedience Movement as a result of the occurrences at Chauri Chura.

- (1) The Working Committee deplores the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chura in having brutally murdered Constables and senselessly burnt the Police *Thana* and tenders its sympathy to the family of the bereaved.
- (2) In view of Nature's repeated warning every time that Mass Civil Disobedience has been imminent, some popular violent outburst has taken place indicating that the atmosphere of the country is not non-violent enough for Mass Civil Disobedience, the latest incidents being the tragic and terrible events at Chauri Chura near Gorakhpur. The Working Committee of the Congress resolves that the Mass Civil Disobedience contemplated at Bardoli and elsewhere be stopped and instructs the local Committees forthwith to advise the cultivators to pay the land revenue and other taxes due to the Government and whose payment might have been suspended in anticipation of Mass Civil Disobedience, and instructs Congress organizations to suspend every other preparatory activity of an offensive nature.
- (3) The suspension of Mass Civil Disobedience shall be continued

till the atmosphere is so non-violent as to ensure the non-repetition of popular atrocities such as at Gorakhpur or hooliganism such as at Bombay and Madras respectively on the 17th of November, 1921, and 15th of January last, until it is revised by the All-India Congress Committee at its special Session to be forthwith convened for confirmation, revision or rejection as the case may be, of the decision of the Working Committee.

- (4) In order to promote a peaceful atmosphere the Working Committee advises all Congress organisations to stop activities specially designed to Court arrest and imprisonment save normal Congress activities and, for that end, all picketing shall be stopped save for the bona fide and peaceful purpose of warning the visitors to liquor shops against the evils of drinking, such picketing to be controlled by men of maturity and known good character.
- (5) The Working Committee advises, till further instructions, the stoppage of all Volunteer processions and public meetings for the purpose of defiance of the notifications regarding public meetings. This, however, shall not interfere with the private meetings of Congress and other Committees or public meetings which are absolutely required for the conduct of the normal activities of the Congress.
- (6) Complaints have been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that *Ryots* are not paying rents to the Zamindars, the Working Committee advises Congress workers and organizations to inform the *Ryots* that such withholding of rents is contrary to the Resolutions of the Congress and that it is injurious to the best interest of the country.
- (7) The Working Committee assures the Zamindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their just and lawful rights and that, even where the *Ryots* have grievances, the Committee's desire is that redress should be sought by mutual consultations and by the usual recourse to arbitrations.
- (8) Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that in the formation of Volunteer Corps, great laxity prevails in the selection and insistence is not made on the full use of hand-spun Khaddar and on the full observance by Hindus of the rule as to the removal of untouchability, nor is care being taken to ascertain that the candidates believe fully in the observance of non-violence in intent, word and deed, in the terms of the Congress Resolution, the Working Committee calls upon all Congress organisations to revise their lists and remove from them the names of all such Volunteers as do not strictly conform to the requirements of the pledge.
- (9) The Working Committee is of opinion that unless Congressmen carry out to the full the Congress Constitution and the Resolu-

tions from time to time issued by the Working Committee, it is not possible to achieve the objects expeditiously or at all.

On returning to Bombay from Bardoli I made a note in my diary as to what had happened during our visit there.

The Working Committee of the Congress finished its deliberations yesterday at Bardoli in the afternoon. Pandit Malaviya was present throughout the greater part of the period. Before leaving Bardoli, Malaviya addressed a public meeting there, which was attended by several hundred persons. Gandhi was also present, so also Mia Haji Chhotani and almost all the other leaders who had been to Bardoli. Malaviya congratulated the people of Bardoli on their readiness to undergo, in the interest of the national cause, the very serious sacrifices and hardship which civil disobedience must involve. He explained why, under Gandhi's wise and large-hearted guidance, the Working Committee had decided to suspend civil disobedience. The decision would disappoint those who ardently desired that Civil Disobedience should begin. But, in view of the tragedy at Chauri Chaura, the decision was both patriotic and righteous. Malaviya warmly admired Gandhi for having come to that decision. Malaviya said that it was only a purely high-souled man like Gandhi, who could calmly arrive at that decision, after having so recently expressed his intention in his letter to the Viceroy to start Civil Disobedience at Bardoli. It proved beyond dispute that Gandhi was absolutely opposed to violence. Malaviya also stated that Gandhi had arrived at that decision purely from the point of view of what was right and proper and without any reference to the attitude of the Government in the matter of Civil Disobedience.

Malaviya explained the substituted programme of a peaceful and constructive character like e.g. the enrolment of a crore of members of the Congress. He strongly recommended that all lovers of the motherland should sink or obviate differences and unite in giving effect to the programme and thereby hasten the advent of Swaraj.

On his way from Bardoli to Bombay, Malaviya addressed another large meeting, on the banks of the river Tapti at Surat, at which also he explained the change of policy and the new programme. Interviewed by Press representatives on the afternoon of the 13th on his arrival in Bombay, Malaviya said that Non-co-operators need not be depressed and discouraged by the policy and programme decided on at Bardoli. The change was in reality not an evidence of weakness but of the strength of conviction that non-violence was the very soul of the non-co-operation movement and essential to its success.

Notwithstanding these pious utterances, the fact remained, as a chronicler of Gandhi's life stated,

"On the spur of the moment, Gandhi decided to scrap the plan of mass campaign. The situation was complicated, as only a few days earlier, he had sent his ultimatum to the Viceroy. How could he retract it without making his programme look ridiculous? 'Satan' said Gandhi, 'forbade it'. Realising that Satan's voice was the voice of pride, Gandhi decided to retract the ultimatum."

"On February 11 Gandhi put his doubts and troubles before the members of the Congress Working Committee. They did not agree with him, but, at his request, it was decided to cancel the programme of mass civil disobedience and to substitute a constructive programme of spinning, temperance, reform and educational activities. On February 12, Gandhi imposed on himself a five days' fast. He did not want his co-workers to follow his example; he must punish himself adequately."

The same author wrote later:

That the sudden stoppage of the movement came as a shock. The Bardoli decision created consternation amongst the Congress leaders, most of whom were in prison and left the rank and file angry. Gandhi was attacked from all sides. Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and others sent from prison angry letters to Gandhi, protesting against his decision. "Why should," asked Motilal Nehru, "a town at the foot of the Himalayas be penalised if a village at Cape Comorin failed to observe non-violence? Isolate Chauri Chaura and Gorakhpur but go on with civil disobedience, individual and mass."

My own admiration for Gandhi increased manifold at his strength in standing against all this pressure and resentment and adhering to what he thought was right action under the circumstances. That was also the sentiment of the promoters of the Malaviya Conference. Accordingly on reaching Bombay, I called a meeting of the Committee of that Conference and we passed the resolutions quoted below and communicated them to Gandhi. I am sure that they gave great solace to him in the action he had taken.

In the meanwhile Gandhi wrote on 19 February to Jawaharlal Nehru, offering him consolation at what had happened; he made an extraordinary confession which added to his great reputation for truthfulness.

I must tell you [Jawaharlal] that this [Chauri Chaura] was the last

straw. My letter to the Viceroy was not sent without misgivings, as its language must make it clear to anyone. I was much disturbed by the Madras doings. But I drowned the warning voice. I received letters both from Hindus and Muslims from Calcutta, Allahabad and the Punjab. All these, before the Chauri Chaura incident, told me that the wrong was not all on the Government side, that our people were becoming aggressive, defiant and threatening, that they were getting out of hand and were not non-violent in demeanour. After this statement, Gandhi quoted several instances which happened in India to the same effect and proceeded to state that "all this news in my possession and much more from the South, the Chauri Chaura came like a powerful match to ignite the gun-powder and there was a blaze. I assure you [Jawaharlal Nehru] that if the things had not been suspended, we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle, but essentially a violent struggle. It is true that non-violence is spreading like the scent of the otto of roses throughout the length and breadth of the land, but the foetid smell of violence is still powerful and it would be unwise to ignore or moderate it. The cause will prosper by this retreat. The movement had unconsciously drifted from the right path. We have come back to our moorings and we can again go straight ahead.

To similar effect was his article in *Young India*, published on 16 February. In that, Gandhi lays bare his heart, much to the chagrin of his ardent followers, but compelling the veneration of all who believed, in spite of differences, that his politics was honest and sincere. A few extracts from that article are reproduced below. In Congress circles, this article was regarded as one of the most extraordinary human documents ever written:

God had been abundantly kind to me. He has warned the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere and which alone can justify mass disobedience.

He warned me in 1919, when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Kheda erred; Amritsar and Kasur erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan mis-calculation.

The next time it was through the events of Bombay that God gave a terrible warning. He made me an eye witness of the deeds of the Bombay mob on the 17th of November.

But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did give the warning. But I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura. I understand that the constables who were so brutally hacked to death had given much provocation. They had even gone back upon the word just given by the Inspector that they would not

be molested. But when the procession had passed, the stragglers were interfered with and abused by the constables. The former cried out for help. The mob returned. The constables opened fire. The little ammunition they had was exhausted and they retired to the *Thana* for safety. The mob, my informant tells me, therefore set fire to the *Thana*. The self-imprisoned constables had to come out for their life and as they did so, they were hacked to pieces and the mangled remains were thrown into the raging flames.

No provocation can possibly justify the brutal murder of men who had been rendered defenceless and who had virtually thrown themselves on the mercy of the mob and when India claims to be non-violent and hopes to mount the throne of liberty through non-violent means, mob violence, even in answer to grave provocation, is a bad augury. Suppose the non-violent disobedience of Bardoli was permitted by God to succeed, the India Government had abdicated in favour of the victors of Bardoli, who would control the unruly element that must be expected to perpetrate inhumanity upon due provocation? Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes a non-violent control over the violent elements in the country. Non-violent non-co-operators can only succeed when they have succeeded in attaining control over the hooligans of India. The tragedy at Chauri Chaura therefore roused me thoroughly.

"But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?" spoke the voice of Satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink. Surely it was awkward to withdraw the next day after pompous threats to the Government and promises to the people of Bardoli. Satan's invitation was to deny truth and, therefore, religion—to deny God himself. I put my doubts and troubles before the Working Committee and other associates whom I found near me. They did not all agree with me at first. Some of them probably do not even now agree. But never has a man been blessed, perhaps, with colleagues and associates so considerate and forgiving as I have. They understood my difficulty and patiently followed my argument. The result is before the public in the shape of the resolutions of the Working Committee. The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise. But there is no doubt that it is religiously sound and I venture to assure the doubters that the country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error. The only virtue I want to claim is truth and non-violence. I lay no claim to superhuman power. I want none. I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow-beings wear and am, therefore, as liable to err as any.

Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. I feel stronger for my confession and the cause must prosper for the retracing. Never has man reached his

destination by persisting in deviation from the right path. It has been urged that Chauri Chaura cannot affect Bardoli. There is danger, it is argued, only if Bardoli is weak enough to be swayed by Chauri Chaura and is betrayed into violence. I have no doubt whatever on that account. The people of Bardoli are, in my opinion, the most peaceful in India. But Bardoli is but a speck on the map of India. Its effort cannot succeed unless there is perfect co-operation from the other parts. Bardoli disobedience will be civil only when the other parts of India remain non-violent. Just as the addition of a grain of arsenic to a pot of milk renders it unfit as food, so will the civility of Bardoli prove unacceptable by the addition of the deadly poison from Chauri Chaura. The latter represents India as much as Bardoli.

I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere about me. My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence. And for me, there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary mental co-operation.

I urge co-workers not to copy my example. The motive in their case will be lacking. They are not the originators of civil disobedience. I am in the unhappy position of a surgeon proved skill-less to deal with an admittedly dangerous case. I must either abdicate or acquire greater skill.

All fasting and all penance must as far as possible be secret. But my fasting is both a penance and a punishment, and a punishment has to be public. It is penance for me and punishment for those whom I try to serve, for whom I love to live and would equally love to die. They have unintentionally sinned against the laws of the Congress. I hope that the workers in the Gorakhpur district will leave no stone unturned to find out the evil-doers and urge them to deliver themselves into custody. But whether the murderers accept my advice or not, I would like them to know that they have seriously interfered with Swaraj operations, that in being the cause of the postponement of the movement in Bardoli, they have injured the very cause they probably intended to serve. I would like them to know too that this movement is not a cloak or a preparation for violence. I would at any rate suffer every humiliation, every torture, absolute ostracism and death itself to prevent the movement from becoming violent or a precursor of violence. They and we must suffer for the crime of Chauri Chaura. The incident proves, whether we wish it or no, the unity of life. Chauri Chaura must stiffen the Government, must still further corrupt the police, and the reprisals that will follow must further demoralize the people. The suspension and the penance will take us back to the position we occupied before the tragedy. If we learn the full lesson of the tragedy, we can turn the curse into a blessing.

On return from Bardoli our activities continued in Bombay to undo the effects of the ultimatum. My diary entries from 13 to 18 February will throw light upon this question.

Monday, 13 February: Meeting of Conference Committee in the evening. Passed four Resolutions on Bardoli decisions and wrote a letter to Gandhi.

The Resolutions were as follows:

1. (a) The Committee of the Bombay Representative Conference places on record its profound satisfaction that the Working Committee of the Congress at its meeting at Bardoli, adopted Resolutions suspending the contemplated Civil Disobedience, suspending aggressive Non-co-operation activities, and modifying the Congress programme so as to emphasise its constructive, moral, social, and economic, as well as political aims.
- (b) The Committee confidently hopes that the All-India Congress Committee will confirm the Resolutions at their meeting which has been specially convened for the purpose.
- (c) The Committee wishes further to express its appreciation of the high courage and patriotism, with which Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues of the Working Committee have acknowledged the significance of the deplorable events at Chauri Chaura, and of the promptitude with which they have revised the Congress programme.
- (d) The Committee conveys its thanks to Mr. Gandhi and the Working Committee for their courtesy in inviting the members of this Committee to attend the meeting of the Working Committee at Bardoli, and in giving Pt. Malaviya and Messrs. Natrajan and Jayakar, who attended it, the opportunity of expressing their views before the Working Committee.
2. The Committee feels it its duty to record its considered opinion that the Resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Congress at Bardoli, when they are confirmed at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee specially convened for the purpose, will ensure an even more favourable atmosphere than that contemplated in His Excellency the Viceroy's speech to the Deputation which waited on him on December 21, at Calcutta, for convening a Representative Conference to consider the grievances and demands of the people.
3. In view of the new situation created by the Resolutions of the Working Committee of the Congress, this Committee is of opinion that the Government of India should give immediate effect to the recommendations, contained in Resolution 3 of the Bombay Representative Conference for the withdrawal of Orders and Notifications and the release of prisoners.

We also wrote the following letter to Gandhi to whom these Resolutions were forwarded:

Bombay, 14th February

We feel we ought to write a line to tell you how highly we value your rare courage and statesmanship in putting through the Bardoli Resolutions in the Working Committee. Neither of us, as you know, has the bump of hero-worship inordinately developed, but we assure you that the pure motive and high principle of your leadership which we witnessed at Bardoli have moved us deeply. That your action has saved the country from what, in our opinion, would have been a dreadful calamity, is a matter for which we are grateful. But we feel still more grateful that our country has had the high privilege of learning from your example what true patriotism is and how it meets situations where right seems to conflict sharply with claims of personal prestige. You have taught us all by your attitude and conduct at this eventful crisis, that the highest truth is also the highest expediency in national as in personal affairs.

We earnestly pray that you may have health and strength vouchsafed to you for many years to lead the country, through honourable and self-respecting ways, to the goal of Swaraj in all the height and width of individual and national self-conquest.

With deep respect,

We remain,
Yours sincerely,
K. Natrajan
M. R. Jayakar

Three days later I received the following letter from Vijaya-
raghavachariar of Salem, on 18 February 1922:

Let me offer you and Mr. Natrajan my warm congratulations on the admirable letter to the Mahatma. It is most opportune. Deep injury was done him personally and to the national cause by the unexpected and extraordinary conduct of Sir C. Shankaran Nair whose record of public service had been bright and without reproach on the whole. So Mr. Natarajan and yourself have done a timely public service in writing and publishing the letter in question, pure and chaste in style and motives.

I believe you will now the better appreciate my motives in not quarrelling with him when he, in company with a few others, asked so disquietingly in the matter of my conduct as president, especially in relation to the programme of Civil Disobedience. I do hope you won't convict me of vanity if I venture to say that the present situation, in so far as it has organic relation to this programme, might and could

have been avoided, if Mahatmaji had allowed me the exercise of my full rights and if he had allowed me to influence his rapid judgment which I endeavoured to influence on bended knees. But I knew that all his conduct, however erroneous in parts was the fruit of his noble inspiration.

I trust too that you won't hesitate to form a new party. Under the auspices of the present trend of events, let us all fervently hope that the need for a further split would vanish.

With kind regards to Mr. Natarajan and yourself.

My diary entries continue:

Friday, 17 February: Meeting at Birla House. Vithalbhai Patel present. He appeared dissatisfied with Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli. Came out with threat that unless Government responded by releasing prisoners etc., the All India Congress Committee would not support Bardoli Resolutions.

Saturday, 18 February: Meeting of Committee of Conference. Jinnah and others present. Discussion whether to send communication to Viceroy. General sense against. But decided that Malaviya should see Viceroy privately. Jinnah again came out strongly against Gandhi and desired to form a political party. Natarajan and I declined to join. No meeting of Conference was to be held till All India Congress Committee's decision about Bardoli Resolution was out.

Bombay public opinion, however, consequent on these happenings was represented in a typical way by a Bombay daily whose habitual attitude was to support Gandhi. A brief extract will be found interesting:

The opinion in Bombay takes the view that the settlement will be welcomed by all shades of sane and sober politicians both inside and outside the Congress. The Nationalist papers of Bombay, for instance, have for several days past been hunting that events at Gorakhpur (Chauri Chaura) and elsewhere should give pause to those who are of opinion that the country was ripe for peaceful Mass Civil Disobedience, although the young enthusiasts among Mr. Gandhi's followers have received a rude shock and feel disappointed at the Working Committee's decision. General feeling is that Mr. Gandhi has done a wise and statesmanlike thing which should have far-reaching effects upon the present disturbed state of the country. Prospects of an honourable settlement are, it is considered, considerably brightened by the decision of the Working Committee. In the opinion of prominent and thoughtful Non-co-operators, the movement has, in passing these Resolutions,

successfully survived a severe test and will consequently grow stronger. They think that its innate purity has been justified by this wise step which the Working Committee has taken.

There was a plethora of criticism and I am briefly quoting below the typical opinions of a few important newspapers in India which represented the special views of their group.

The Times of India (Anglo-Indian):

There is little in the new programme of the Congress on which we cannot all unite, if not in joint work then at least in benevolent sympathy.

Then it quoted items like Khaddar, organizations of schools, increase of literacy, promotion of temperance organisations of villages and town Panchayats, as items on which there will be general agreement. The Paper then proceeded to observe:

We are all one in the cause of social service. Here then is a programme of constructive social work which will unite instead of dividing, which will heal the wounds of India and not inflame them. If that is the programme of the Congress, then we can say All's Well: India can go straight ahead, working with zeal and confidence to full Self-Government, to an Indian State in which we shall be happy to live, which we shall all be proud to serve.

The Hindu (Madras daily):

To those, who like ourselves, had serious misgivings as to the wisdom of embarking on Civil Disobedience at the present time, the decision of the Working Committee to suspend the programme of offensive non-co-operation will come as a great relief.

We must not overlook two important considerations. One is the practical certainty of the Mahatma's arrest, the moment the campaign begins. In the second place, it would be impossible to avoid elsewhere in India the repercussions of the struggle in Bardoli. Bardoli itself might suffer in peace but there are areas which might attempt to translate their sympathy and enthusiasm into unpleasant shapes. We must also draw pointed attention to the fact that the decision implies the suspension of all offensive activities, thus going beyond the terms of Mr. Gandhi's offer in connection with the abortive Conference proposals. With wise forethought, the Working Committee has provided a constructive programme of work which, if less spectacular than Civil

Disobedience, will go far unobtrusively to strengthen the foundations of the national edifice.

The Leader (Allahabad Daily—Liberal):

The Resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Congress indicate the dawn of reason and the triumph of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the members of the Bombay Congress Committee and the moderates among Non-co-operators like Mr. Jayakar, who were opposed to the destructive items of the non-co-operation programme. The resolutions passed outline a constructive programme of social, educational and political work and are calculated to minimise occasions of friction between the lawfully established authority and the Non-co-operators. They will bring about a relaxation in the existing tension and induce a peaceful atmosphere, comparatively speaking, if they are strictly followed by the non-co-operation workers throughout the country and are not departed from in letter and spirit as so many other resolutions of the Congress Committee have been.

The Tribune (Lahore Daily—Independent):

In a mood of healthy reaction induced by what is Nature's warning, the Working Committee has done what few had actually expected, though many desired it. What is the Government going to do? All the conditions laid down by the Viceroy and the Governor of Bengal, the Home Member or by anyone else have now been completely satisfied. Is it not therefore in the fitness of things that Government should at once rise to the height of duty and the God-given opportunity and redeem the pledged word of the Viceroy in the Calcutta speech? What excuse then can the Government have for not calling a Round Table Conference of representatives of the people?

The Indian Social Reformer (Independent—Bombay):

It is relevant to point out that the Bardoli development has a strength and vitality of its own apart from the All India Congress Committee. On the surface, the resolutions passed by the Congress Working Committee at Bardoli were the direct result exclusively of the Chauri Chaura tragedy. Mahatma Gandhi and the other members of the Working Committee have said so and no doubt they honestly think that is the case. But really the Chauri Chaura murders were merely the last in a chain of circumstances which brought about this radical change of the Congress programme. The riots at Bombay and Madras and those at Malegaon and the Malabar outbreak, have had their share in shaping Congress opinion. But more potent than these exhibitions of violence,

has been the fact that the numerous negations of the Congress programme have provoked something like disgust in the more virile minds of the Congress. This was voiced in a remarkable speech by Mr. M. R. Jayakar some months ago at a Conference at Akola. A comparison of the several suggestions made in that speech with the modifications of the Congress programme adopted at Bardoli, shows that the new programme, though to all appearance it is a sudden inspiration born of the burning and bloodshed at Gorakhpur (Chauri Chaura), has really a deeper and more solid cause for its coming into being. If this were not the case, we should be inclined, with several hostile critics, to doubt the permanence and reality of the conversion of the Congress to constructive methods. Because we know that the new programme has not been called into existence in any such happy-go-lucky fashion, because we know that it has the deep thought and solid sentiment of many thoughtful Congressmen behind it, we do not share these suspicions and we look upon the revised programme as permanently and truly reflecting the real sentiments of the country. Both appreciation and criticism have naturally fastened upon Mahatma Gandhi but for whose courageous love of truth, revision of the Congress programme in keeping with the views of the riper minds of that party, would have taken longer time. A British paper has written of the Mahatma as one whose eyes are fixed upon the dim past of India. As a fact, however, there is no more English-minded leader in all India today than the Mahatma. His virtues, as well as his faults, are, almost all, not Indian, but English. His rigorous punctuality, his passion for time-tables, the scrupulous and almost superstitious regularity of his daily routine, are altogether un-Indian and almost wholly English. English too is his disbelief, amounting to contempt of theory, his slight regard for and knowledge of history, and his faith in muddling through as the best method of conducting national affairs. There are people going about mysteriously whispering to the credulous, their prophecy that the Mahatma, as an Indian political leader, is as good as extinct. These pessimists will soon realise their mistake.

New India (Madras Daily, Besant):

In view of the massacre at Chauri Chaura, the Committee suspends Civil Disobedience until it is certain that such popular atrocities and such hooliganism as that at Bombay and Madras will not recur, that is till the Greek kalends. The Government and the country will heave a sigh of relief.

A meeting of the Congress is to be called to confirm the resolutions. If the Congress confirms them, and thus returns to legitimate and constitutional paths, we venture to suggest that the Governor in Council should advise the Local Governments to set free all who had been imprisoned under the Notifications and thus wipe away the memory

of the controversies which have arisen over them and their result.

Justice (Madras Daily—Non-Brahmin):

The present programme, if followed in its entirety, will prove to be innocuous and as such there will be few people who will be disposed to take any exception to it. But the question is how far the present injunctions will be obeyed by the large mass of hooligans and rowdies who have joined the ranks of the Non-co-operators and who have revelled so long in the opportunities afforded by the previous programme to indulge in their nefarious predilections towards violence and lawlessness? There is, however, one consolation and that is that the Congress has now entirely dissociated itself from the provocative aspect of the propaganda which its adherents have so long been pursuing.

The Civil and Military Gazette (Lahore Daily—Anglo-Indian):

So thorough going recantation could only come from Mr. Gandhi's own emotional temperament, but it is just this element of emotionalism which inspires doubt as to its practical effect. We had similar experience of humiliation and contrition after Bombay riots and its effect had worn off in a week or two and Mr. Gandhi was once more in full tide of seditious activities. The country and Government cannot afford to be dependent on the changing moods of so volatile a personality as Mr. Gandhi.

The personal interview of a Congress leader of great esteem, dignity and reputation, set the seal of approval on the Bardoli decisions. This was the testimony of Hakim Ajmal Khan. It had a very quieting effect on the troubled situation. He sent it in the form of a message addressed to the people. After regretting his own absence at Bardoli, and after mentioning what is prohibited by the Bardoli resolutions, he proceeded to observe:

All other normal activities of the Congress are permitted to continue. The recent occurrences indicate that every part of the country has not yet equally imbibed the complete spirit of non-violence. This is the *sine qua non* for conducting Mass Civil Disobedience. In order to carry on the non-co-operation movement and thus to make it an effective instrument in hastening the attainment of our triple goal, the Committee was induced to pass those Resolutions. It is our experience that whenever mob violence has given the Government a chance to

retaliate, we have not only suffered heavy loss of life but the movement itself received a set-back. I hope that the ensuing meetings of the All India Congress Committee and Khilafat Committee, after thoroughly considering the pros and cons of the situation, will give a correct lead to the country.

I have reserved till the last, quoting the opinion of the *Bombay Chronicle* (Bombay Daily—Congress) because it had always been regarded as the extremist supporter of the N. C. O. programme. The public mind, therefore, waited to see what change in its normal attitude had been brought by the Working Committee's Resolutions. It stated its opinion as follows:

Our opponents will doubtless describe the Working Committee's decision as another admission of failure by the Mahatma. Nor will they be wrong. But in their further conclusions they will most assuredly deceive themselves. For every such honest admission of failure hastens the advent of Swaraj and the defeat of our opponents with their "politics" and repression. The Bardoli decision has strengthened our cause—the cause of Swaraj. The evil of Chauri Chaura has been discounted, and our opponents have been discomfited. As the Mahatma wisely observed "Stubborn and implacable resistance against internal corruption is enough resistance against the Government."

Reproduced below are two letters out of several from distinguished Congressmen which I received after my return to Bombay from Bardoli. They will serve to indicate the kind of thoughts current in the Congress circle they represented. A letter from Satyamurti was as follows:

I should like to hear from you in detail exactly, the lie of the land at Bardoli. Please do spare some time to write to me a full and detailed letter.

I see a rumour in the papers that our Malaviya Conference Committee is to be dissolved. I hope the rumour is false. I do not see why we should dissolve ourselves, simply because our first attempt failed. I think it would be a disaster if we dissolve this Committee and leave the country at the mercy of the two supermen—Gandhi and Reading.

On Sunday, another Madras leader, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, wrote:

I presume you were in Bardoli and took part in the proceedings therein. I am anxious to know where we stand regarding future work.

Of course, the whole-hoggers have simply to do what Mahatamji wants. We have now to decide upon our future work and organization as distinct from these friends. Kindly let me know what Panditji, Jinnah and yourself have been thinking of and what Mr. Satyamurti and myself—I am not sure of others—may start to do and what may be done also by us at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, if it is worthwhile.

The decision of the Working Committee had the expected effect on the official British mind. It was felt that the Bardoli decision emboldened the Government. Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State, stated: "Demands were made in the very mistaken belief that we contemplate retreat from India—that India would challenge with success the most determined people in the world, who would once again answer the challenge with all the vigour and determination at its command." Lord Birkenhead, the Tory spokesman, reminded India that Britain had lost none of her "hard fibre."

Then followed a debate in Parliament on 15 February 1922. It contained an attack on Montagu and occasioned a reply from him explaining his policy on Indian affairs.

Montagu said he wanted to say to India that their policy was the maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire, coupled with the grant of opportunity for the development to full self-Government within the Empire. He would say something about the conditions of that policy because he did not think it was at present sufficiently understood in India. He did not think there would ever be any question of going back on the policy announced in 1917 but Parliament would not be justified at present in thinking of extending the scope of that policy. He emphasised that further steps towards Self-Government depended upon the Parliament's becoming satisfied with the use made of the first instalment. Government desired, if the matter went well, that eventually further steps would be taken, but Parliament had decided that if the matter did not go well, no further steps should be taken, and he believed that, as far as the House of Commons were concerned, that criterion would not be departed from.

At that very serious moment, he wanted to say to India that he did not believe that the British Parliament would even jeopardise the opportunity promised to India of working to Self-Government within the Empire. "If India will believe, as she ought to believe, in our good faith, if she will accept

the offer made to her by the British Parliament, then she will find the British Empire, for which so many Indians and Englishmen have so recently died and which is at present saving the world, will give her liberty not licence, freedom not anarchy, progress not stampede, peace and fulfilment of the best destinies the future can possibly offer."

After a short debate, the Premier, Lloyd George wound up on Indian policy in the following words:

There was much in the state of India that justified grave concern, but ~~he~~^{we} deprecated alarm. The situation was well within the compass of our strength without adding to our burdens, but, there was no doubt that it was the situation which demanded examination by the Imperial Parliament as well as by the Imperial Government. Unrest in India, however, did not begin two years ago, and it was idle to attribute the unrest to something which had occurred since Mr. Montagu assumed the reins of office.

Dealing with the cause of unrest, he referred to the education of Indians in English Universities and said it was "putting new wine into old bottles. Those bottles burst and intoxication swept over the East. The story of India was the story of Japan and of China. It was inevitable when chemicals of the East were mixed with those of the West. Sooner or later, an explosion would be produced. Undoubtedly, the war had accentuated unrest. It shook up the whole world." He warned members that Debates in the House of Commons had great repercussion in India and anything which might lead Indians to believe that we were going to break faith would have the most disastrous effects upon the friends of British rule. "It was, therefore, important that we should make it clear that we meant to give the Reform Act a chance to succeed, and failure must not be attributable to our default. Educated classes in India must be given the best opportunity of making that experiment a success, and further reforms must await the result of experiment. The authority of Government must be maintained unchallenged. They would support the Government of India in any action for the establishment of authority. Every despatch to India was so couched."

He declared emphatically that "The Imperial Government wished to make it clear that in no circumstances was it proposed to withdraw or impair the full sovereignty of the King Emperor. We could not divest ourselves of the great trust

we had accepted in India without shame and dishonour. What would be left if we departed? Would Mr. Gandhi govern and protect, from inevitable pillage and ruin, even one million Indians? We had only to see what happened in the Moplah rising, even with British authority there. India could not be treated as one people. The only unity created in India had been by British Rule, and the effect of her withdrawal would be chaos, confusion, and desolation indescribable. It was right that that should be brought home in India as well as here."

As for the opinion of a section of the British Press about the withdrawal at Bardoli it may be stated in general terms that the Imperial Government and the Government of India were severely criticised for the stage to which they had allowed the situation in India to develop.

For instance *The Daily Telegraph* considered that the Government of India's vacillation and uncertainty had perilously compromised the British position in India, and, therefore, throughout the East. This must be restored by a change in the spirit of administration and the ending of the course of tolerance and indecision. It proceeded to trounce Mr. Gandhi, who, it said, had forfeited the respect formerly entertained for him. The suspension of his arrest was, it said, in line with the record of indecision hitherto, that there had been enough of the policy of attempting to conciliate the so-called leaders.

The Times also attacked what it regarded as the Government of India's unpardonable weakness in not carrying out its intention to arrest Mr. Gandhi "despite his sham retraction." It declared, without hesitation, "that peaceable conditions could never be restored in India while he was free to range through the country at will. Lord Reading must grasp the nettle. If the Viceroy hesitated further, Indians would be confirmed in the belief that the Government of India was afraid to act. The paper insisted that India must be governed by acts as well as words, lest the worst befall. It concluded: "After a trial lasting many months it has become obvious that combination of Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu at the head of Indian affairs is not working well. There must be separation. Nobody suggests that a change of Viceroy is necessary. The alternative is to appoint a new head of the India Office, preferably, a statesman of a stronger fibre."

The Daily News also adopted a firm tone, and submitted three main considerations. In the first place, Indians must

prove their capacity and willingness to make a practical use of the reforms already made. Secondly, the British would never be intimidated to dash out of India. Thirdly, if they were so intimidated, it would be an irreparable disaster to India in the present stage of her political and economic evolution. The paper hoped that Lord Reading would arrange a Round Table Conference as a sequel to the suspension of Gandhi's arrest.

The Morning Post was most displeased at the result of the debate, and accused the Imperial Government of lacking the necessary qualities to handle the position.

A slightly different attitude was adopted by the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Westminster Gazette*. The latter observed:

The time is almost past when we can take seriously Mr. Gandhi's hesitations and temporary repentances. Again and again his policy has resulted in riot and bloodshed, and the only effect apparently is to make him believe that a fortnight can change fundamental facts of Indian life. The Government of India cannot abdicate in favour of Mr. Gandhi, or allow him to keep this pistol levelled at its head without defaulting in its simple duty to Indian people. Mr. Gandhi's movement is not democratic but reactionary in all respects, except its nationalism. We must govern India wisely and progressively but firmly or go; and if we go, we make way not for the popularly elected rulers, but for an autocracy and anarchy. If we stay, there is the real chance that an India may grow up capable of undertaking not Swaraj, as Mr. Gandhi, with his mind far back in ages, understands it, but Self-Government of the twentieth century of sense.

The opinion of the Indian Press on the India Debate in Parliament was as follows: *The Englishman* said:

Mr. Montagu and his friends had started to awaken the masses in India to a sense of politics, which resulted in meaningless strikes, agrarian riots, mob outrages and dislocation of trade, which, unless stopped, will involve India in ruin greater than that of Russia. In a crisis, Government is justified in adopting the method of executive orders which place expediency before legality. It should be made plain, that the old Roman maxim about the safety of the republic being the first law is based on a correct understanding of the responsibilities of an administration.

The Statesman observed:

Mr. Montagu was either unable or unwilling to give Parliament any adequate account of the non-co-operation movement. Neither Mr. Montagu nor Mr. Lloyd George appeared to have bestowed any serious thought on the means by which British authority was to maintain the declaration they made, that Parliament still governed the country unless supplemented by action. The orators had wasted their breath.

The Indian Daily News said:

It seems that the Premier sees India through "blue books" only. The important point in his speech was that he was for law and order, that is what India wants at present.

The Bengalee remarked:

A grave sense of disappointment will be occasioned by the declaration that Parliament will not be justified at present in thinking of extending the scope of the policy laid down in 1917. The antidote to Non-co-operation poison lies not in crying halt to the beneficent work so ably begun by Mr. Montagu.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika admitted that an awkward, embarrassing and hazardous situation had arisen. The situation needed tactful handling consistent with the principles of democracy. Repression was no remedy and was worse than useless. Mr. Montagu had boastfully declared that India would not challenge with success the most determined people in the world, who would once again answer the challenge with all the vigour and determination at its command.

As regards this utterance, the *Bombay Chronicle* taking up the challenge wrote on 17 February:

While we must not for the world lower the average Briton's self-esteem, we feel that Mr. Montagu's remarks are worth a little examination. The words "once again", in the speeches in the Debate in Parliament, suggest that the most determined people in the world have formerly been challenged in precisely the circumstances in which India challenges them today. A hurried resume of past history recalls to mind America, Australia, South Africa, Canada, and Ireland, as possible past challengers of the most determined people in the world. The first-named, and the last, most certainly flung down the gauntlet of defiance. The others had, perhaps, no occasion to do so, as the most determined people in the world hastened, with most surprising alacrity, to surrender to them all they desired and more, for reasons which will be apparent

when we recall the very emphatic lesson which America taught the most determined people in the world. And Ireland very recently challenged these most awesomely determined people, who, with the trouncing America gave them, less vivid in memory than of yore, strove once again to live up to the title which Lord North probably conferred upon them and which Sir Hamar Greenwood, Mr. Lloyd George and now Mr. Montagu have revived. Today, the most determined people in the world have given Ireland the freedom, to gain which Ireland even descended to intrigue with Germany. Very determined indeed are the English—upto a point. That point reached, they will fawn upon those who challenged their obstinacy and win by conciliation what they could not keep by force of arms.

And so we challenge the most determined people in the world to a conflict in which our weapons are far more terribly potent than the mere fire-arms. But in this Jihad they will be defeated by no weapons save the Truth which is Love. True believers, who maintain in the teeth of all the West's armies, that God is Greatest, will meet them unarmed without generals and with no weapons.

Hindu and Christian, Zoroastrian and Muslim, India's Nationalists maintain that God is Greatest.

At this time, the *Bombay Chronicle* did excellent service to the national cause by placing the teachings of Gandhi, which had found expression in the Bardoli Resolutions, on the pedestal of the eternal principles of the truth, love and the brotherhood of man, preached by the esteemed prophets of the world's great religions.

This attack of the *Bombay Chronicle* was preceded by the following readable comments on 15 February under the heading Swaraj:

The news of the Bardoli decision 'has caused surprise' in Britain. The cynical West has come to a pass when honesty appears to it surprising. If a Christ came to the East today and preached a doctrine urging his disciples to give all they had to the poor and follow him, we may be sure the *London Daily Telegraph* would dub Christ a Marxian visionary. The *London Times* would commission Professor Sydney Webb or Mr. Keynes to write a lengthy article, packed with convincing figures, explaining how, from a modern economist's point of view, Christ's teaching was most unsound—nay, mischievous—and that the Kingdom of Christ could not raise a loan from the British bankers, who have just placed several millions in hands red with the blood of murdered Muslims. The *Morning Post* would suggest that Christ came to the East from Moscow with a mission from Lenin and Trotsky, both Jews; that Christ was a Jew; that there was obviously a Jewish

conspiracy against the British Empire, in which Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading were doubtless involved; that Christ must be deported, or tried and executed. Also, that Mr. Montagu must go. So it is with the surprise evinced in Great Britain at the Mahatma's strange honesty.

I had been continuously receiving invitations to visit Delhi where a meeting of the All India Congress Committee was going to be held to consider the Bardoli Resolutions leading to a withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Accordingly on 22 February I left for Delhi. My diary entry relating to that occasion, reads as follows:

Busy since morning arranging for accommodation to Delhi. At last moment, forced to leave in Miya Chhotani's compartment from Colaba for want of other accommodation. Became very ill on the way. Got down at Palghar and had to return home at night.

This was very unfortunate, for Gandhi expected me by his side at Delhi, where there was going to be practically a review by the All India Congress Committee of his decision at Bardoli and we did not feel sure that, in the light of the agitation which extremist Non-co-operators had been creating against Gandhi's decision, whether the All India Congress Committee would agree to confirm what Bardoli had decided.

On 24 February, the All India Congress Committee met in Delhi. At the meeting, Gandhi had to face the music. Before the meeting commenced he had a talk with the representatives of various provinces. Then the Committee met the delegates before framing its resolution. In that meeting, Gandhi read out letters from Motilal Nehru and Lajpat Rai strongly condemning the Bardoli resolution. In reply, he had but one word to say, that those who went to jail were civilly dead and could not claim or be expected to advise those outside. He asked the delegates to think for themselves.

In the A. I. C. C. meeting Gandhi moved his resolution.

But the storm burst with unexampled fury. Gandhi was assailed on all sides. He was taken to task for resiling from the movement, and for the Bardoli resolutions in particular. Bengal and Maharashtra tore him to pieces. Why should Individual Civil Disobedience not be continued? Even devoted men raised the standard of revolt. Why should civil resisters wear khaddar? These were the questions put to Gandhi. Every line of the Bardoli resolutions was subjected to a scath-

ing attack. The meeting reduced itself to attacks from Maharashtra and Bengal. A vote of censure on Gandhi was moved by Dr. Moonje at the A. I. C. C. meeting. Some speakers supported it by their speeches, but when it was put to the vote only those who had spoken in favour voted for it, the rest of the House voting against it. Gandhi did not permit anyone to speak against the motion of censure. The storm blew over and he remained unmoved.

The A. I. C. C. virtually endorsed the Bardoli resolutions of the Working Committee, except in some particulars. The full text of the main Resolutions was as follows:

The All India Congress Committee having carefully considered the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at its meeting held at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant, confirms the said resolutions with the modifications noted therein and further resolves that individual Civil Disobedience, whether of a defensive or aggressive character, may be commenced in respect of particular places or particular laws at the instance of and upon permission being granted therefor by the respective Provincial Committee; provided that such Civil Disobedience shall not be permitted unless all the conditions laid down by the Congress or the All India Congress Committee or the Working Committee are strictly fulfilled.

The All India Congress Committee wishes it to be understood that the resolutions of the Working Committee do not mean any abandonment of the original Congress programme of non-co-operation or permanent abandonment of Mass Civil Disobedience.

The All India Congress Committee holds Civil Disobedience to be the right and duty of the people to be exercised and performed whenever the State opposes the declared will of the people.

The A. I. C. C. reiterates its faith in Civil Disobedience and considers that an atmosphere of necessary non-violence can be established by the workers concentrating upon the constructive programme.

Though in the end Gandhi thus triumphed before the A.I.C.C. he suffered keenly, for he realised that the majority was not backing him sincerely. He knew that some of those who voted for him called him "Dictator" behind his back. He knew also that he no longer reflected the sentiment of the country. And he admitted this in his article in *Young India* of 2 March 1922 in the following words.

There is so much undercurrent of violence both conscious and unconscious, that I was actually and literally praying for a disastrous defeat.

I have always been in a minority. In South Africa, I started with practical unanimity, reached a minority of sixty-four and even sixteen, and went up again a huge majority. The best and the most solid work was done in the wilderness of minority. I know that the only thing that the Government dreads is this huge majority I seem to command. They little know that I dread it even more than they. I have become literally sick of the adoration of the unthinking multitude. I have warned my friends of the Committee that I am incorrigible. I shall continue to confess blunders each time the people commit them. The only tyrant I accept in this world is the 'still small voice' within. And even though I have to face the prospect of a minority of one, I humbly believe I have the courage to be in such a hopeless minority. That to me is the only truthful position.

This non-violence, therefore, seems to be due merely to our helplessness. It almost appears as if we are nursing in our bosoms the desire to take revenge the first time we get the opportunity. Is it not a futile, experiment I am conducting? Let us be truthful. If it is by force that we wish to gain Swaraj, let us drop non-violence and offer such violence as we may. It would be a manly, honest and sober attitude, and no one can then accuse us of the terrible charge of hypocrisy.

The minority has different ideals. It does not believe in the programme. Is it not right and patriotic for them to form a new party and a new organization? They will then truly educate the country. Those who do not believe in the crowd should surely retire from the Congress.

On the same day on which he wrote in *Young India* he sent me the following letter, from Sabarmati on 2 March 1922.

I was so sorry you became suddenly ill and had to get down at Palghar.

I would like you carefully to read every line of *Young India*. I write to you to tell you that the meeting of the All India Congress has simply confirmed the views with which I left Bardoli. So far as my influence counts I am going to dissuade people in the different provinces from embarking upon even defensive Civil Disobedience. For the time being, I have persuaded them to concentrate their attention upon the constructive programme, but all this does not mean any change in my attitude towards the Government. Its fraud, its hypocrisy, its unblushing worship of violence repel me more than ever and the time may come when I would want to shun the multitude as much as I shun the Government, though for a different reason. I am anxious to enlist your full co-operation.

Will you not give your whole-hearted co-operation in the prosecution of this constructive programme? I would like you not to be engrossed

in the effort to bring about a Round Table Conference, which is a futile effort at the present time; nor to be thinking of the prisoners. They will be quite all right taking their rest-cure in the prisons. I would so much like you to give your undivided attention to some part or other of the constructive programme. If you are well, as I hope you are, I would even trouble you to come over here and pass a quiet day with me. We could then discuss the possibilities of working along the lines indicated by me. I am in Ahmedabad till Wednesday. Next Monday, as you know, is my silent day. This will be in your hands on Friday. You can come on Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday, the earlier is better.

Accordingly, I decided to pay a visit to him at Ahmedabad. I was impressed with his great confidence in the constructive programme, which unfortunately was not shared in an equal degree by the extreme Non-co-operators itching for a fight. I stood in complete agreement with the programme though my confidence in it was not as deep and vital as Gandhi's. I, however, decided to pursue the programme, at least some items of it, principally khaddar, for which, I had already given him a donation of Rs. 25,000. I had faith in it and I sedulously devoted every day some time to using the Charkha and attained some proficiency in spinning, the results of which I sent him periodically in collected bundles of yarn. While the economics of this programme was being doubted even by the extreme followers of Gandhi, I was convinced that his theory was right that spinning would be a very profitable secondary occupation, especially amongst remote villagers during such time as the monsoon period when they had no agricultural occupation. Accordingly on 7 March I wrote a reply to Gandhi:

I have received your kind letter and I perused it carefully. I am not at present completely restored to health. The deep exhaustion which overtook me about the time I left for Delhi has not yet disappeared. I am, however, feeling much better. I do not sleep well, except after special effort. As soon as I feel strong enough, I propose to undergo a minor operation of the throat and one which I had to postpone so long for want of time. I shall run up to you at an early date as soon as I feel equal to the exertion and will meet you at Bardoli or wherever you may be. I shall spend more than a day with you in quiet and restful thoughts.

I agree that a Round Table Conference's idea is futile. My Committee (of Malaviya Conference) also takes nearly the same view

and we shall probably dissolve ourselves in a week or two. I also agree that the Government have, by their conduct come to forfeit by this time any vestiges of confidence which some of us may have had in their methods. I have read the last issue of *Young India* and agree with most of the sentiments therein. I cannot, however, help thinking that it would have been better—more political as well as more honest—for the All India Congress Committee to confirm the Bardoli resolutions *in toto*. I can, however, imagine to myself what atmosphere of opposition must have surrounded you and Pandit Malaviya there. I can well realise how the insidious provocation offered by the vulgar bluffing of Lord Birkenhead, Mr. Montagu, Sir William Vincent and lastly the reptile Anglo-Indian Press had its effect upon the deliberations of the All India Congress Committee. It would have been wiser to rise above the temptation to retaliate, ignoring the idle threats of these vulgar men. If the Bardoli Resolutions had been confirmed *in toto*, they would have clearly put Government in the wrong and deprived them of all plausible pretexts to be harsh and vindictive. I recognise, however, that under adverse circumstances you did your best, and are even now trying to soften the consequences of the Delhi addendum by issuing a clear recommendation to the Provincial Congress Committee to suspend, for the present, even individual Civil Disobedience. In your attempt to do this, men like me (and I may add even Mr. Natrajan in whom I have found the most loyal ally in full agreement with my sentiments) will give you their complete co-operation. Your remarks in favour of Khadi and Swadeshi I fully appreciate. They are like preaching to the convert. I have always regarded it as the soundest part of your programme. I do my little bit to carry it out in my own life. I have not gone back to practice in spite of many temptations and may not do so for some time yet. But you know that my views on this question have been opposed to yours and I am more convinced than ever that this part of your teachings was unsound and has caused unnecessary hardship and embitterment. This is, however, no place for entering into a long argument on this question, but you will allow me to say that even when I suspended my practice, I was actuated more by the desire to support you most loyally, though on the principle itself I totally differed from you. My views are still the same. Several pleaders, many of whom are unadulterated Non-co-operators, have sent me messages inquiring when I would resume practice. You can imagine the motive behind the inquiry. My experience during the last 15 months has convinced me that the boycott of Courts has failed. The recent judgment of the High Court in the ill-advised Dharwar appeal is a painful reminder of our failure.

As for going in the Councils, there is no difficulty at present because we are yet far away from the next election. We need not overagitate a difference which is of no practical importance at the present crisis. I entirely concur in your sentiments that until we have secured a footing

of strength in the country, our position in the Councils, always a reflection of our strength outside, will remain weak and feeble. But while holding this view, I am also of opinion that the Councils ought to have been utilised as a means of developing our strength and that we have made a mistake in allowing them to be so manipulated by the Bureaucracy as to be used as powerful weapons for counteracting the effects of our agitation in the country. You have only to recall what incalculable mischief the adverse Resolutions of the Assembly and the Council of State and the question of repression have done in and outside India. The present bankruptcy of the country has been largely brought about by the feebleness of their opposition, and their inability to check official extravagance. However we need not pursue this difference further, because, as I have said above, this question is not yet within the region of a near possibility. As for the boycott of schools and colleges, I am glad to recognise that the terms of the Bardoli Resolutions put more reliance on creation than on destruction. I agree in your wish to create independent educational institutions. We will not quarrel about the nature and effects of our past agitation on this point. It is so important at present to discover the points of agreement that I do not wish to harp on difference where they are not material to our present solidarity. Not that I wish to gloss over these but the need of the hour is to give you all the support and co-operation that I can. I fear that your present attitude as shown at Bardoli and Delhi will cost you the support of a considerable number of your followers who have hitherto been most noisy in their adherence to you. But I am sure that while you may lose support in this quarter, you will gain more among a quieter class of your associates who had so far stood by, frightened by the rapidity of the marches and the din which accompanied each stage. You have wisely created scope for quiet and healthy work, away from public meetings, Congress Session and even prisons. I am sure many workers will be delighted to support you in your efforts. When you advised some time ago, that courting arrests and imprisonment was a means in itself of effecting our salvation, you assumed, I imagine, that this Government had a sense of remorse, generosity and fellow-feeling which could be awakened by our sacrifices. But I am sure you must be convinced now that these sentiments, which you so easily took for granted, do not exist in the present system. They may exist in the British race or even in a few individuals you may have known as friends. But it is painful to have to recognise that their system of rule is devoid of such capacities. That in my opinion is enough ground for your present view that these experiments in youthful sacrifice ought to be stopped. We need all our men and energy for carrying out the programme of spade work you have set for them. I, therefore, fully appreciate your present opposition to the Civil Disobedience, whether individual or mass. The line between the two was never very clear and was always liable to

be obliterated in times of turmoil as present events have proved.

Many Congress friends felt disappointed that I could not go to Delhi to support Gandhi's stand against his opponents, at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee. I received several messages in this connection. A general sense that Gandhi had weakened was wide-spread and his followers unable to follow his philosophy materially contributed to heighten this friction.

We knew that Government would take advantage of this unpopularity and arrest Gandhi. He himself had this feeling and on the day previous to his arrest wrote as follows in *Young India* of 9 March 1922.

My removal from their midst will be a benefit to the people. In the first instance the superstition about the possession of supernatural powers by me will be demolished. Secondly, the belief that people have accepted the non-co-operation programme only under my influence and that they have no independent faith in it will be disproved. Thirdly, our capacity for Swaraj will be proved by our ability to conduct our activities in spite of the withdrawal even of the originator of the current programme. Fourthly and selfishly, it will give me a quiet and physical rest, which perhaps, I deserve.

It was accompanied by the following letter to me signed by his stenographer, Golikery.

Satyagraha Ashram
Sabarnati, 11th March, 1922.

Dear Sir,

The accompanying letter was dictated to me by Mahatma Gandhi last night about an hour and half prior to his arrest. The letter was actually typed out by me early this morning and is being posted to you without Mahatmajī's signautre but in accordance with his instructions.

The letter to me dictated by Gandhi to his stenographer on the 10th, as stated above, was as follows:

I do wish you will soon get well and strong.

I thank you for your long letter, but I won't weary you with my counter argument. As you know my arrest is reported to be imminent, but if I am not arrested I shall look forward to your meeting. Just one thing I would like to say in order to correct what seems to me to be a misapprehension. I should be sorry if anything I have written

has led you to infer that I have in any shape or form altered my view about the efficacy of imprisonment for our salvation.

I have not lost faith in the responsiveness to sacrifice. Only those who have courted imprisonment, have not all been of the right sort. I certainly expect no response whatsoever to the imprisonment of those who are full of violence in their hearts, and my reason for suspending even Civil Disobedience for the time being is to see if it is at all possible to produce an atmosphere of real non-violence. Thus my present view is not due to my discovery of greater hardness of heart in the administrators but to the painful discovery of much less non-violence now in our midst than I had expected.

On 10 March, the date of the letter, I made the following entry in my diary:

Montagu resigned. I am expecting a policy of severe repression.

On Friday 10 March Gandhi was arrested. The entries in my diary after his arrest are as follows:—

Wednesday, 13 March: Busy day. Saw Visvesvaraya. Then called on Natrajan. Discussed idea of going to Ahmedabad to meet Gandhi. Then called on Jinnah. Jinnah egoistical and anti-Gandhi as usual. I did not accept his suggestion that I should actively busy myself with calling a public meeting relating to Montagu's resignation only, but avoiding all references to Gandhi's arrest.

Friday, 17 March: Lying ill in bed with fever. Wife left for Ahmedabad with a party of Bombay ladies to meet Gandhi in Jail tomorrow. I could not join owing to illness but I gave a letter to Gandhi and Banker. Wife much affected by Gandhi's arrest.

The letter dated 17 March which I sent to Gandhi with my wife was as follows:

You must have by this time received the wire I sent you this afternoon saying that I was confined to bed with fever and that my wife would see you in the Jail tomorrow. Accordingly, she has gone, taking with her our united wishes for health and happiness during your absence from our midst. I am sure the country will rally round your message (hereinafter quoted). I regret very much that I will not be able to see you tomorrow (the expected day of his trial). I can only make amends for it by recalling the noblest verse in the Gita "O, Kaunteya, know Thou for certain that My Devotee perisheth never". It is a singular fortune of India that, at this crisis, her greatest leader is also the humblest *Bhakta*. That fact must secure for his noble

mission the blessing and co-operation of Divine Providence. I am reminded of the episode in the Mahabharat, when the Pandawas elected in favour of the solitary presence and help of Shri Krishna, as against his mighty and powerful hordes of cavalry and warriors, which the Kaurawas asked for. We shall try to be worthy of this tradition during your absence. I won't say good-bye, but only *au revoir*.

With affectionate regards.

The story of his arrest, which is an epic in itself, was very touching, and when known in India it produced a great impression. As a judicious chronicler of Gandhi's life observes:

Lord Reading was certain that the Bardoli Resolutions were the beginning of the end of non-co-operation. Nevertheless, the Resolutions put the Viceroy in a dilemma. The calling off of the campaign forced the Government to think over their next move. Arrangements had been made for Gandhi's arrest and on the very day February 12, 1922, on which the Resolutions were passed, Lord Reading had informed Montagu that the Bombay Government had been instructed to effect the arrest on the 14th. Lord Reading was of the opinion that the mere calling off of the Civil Disobedience made no material change in the indictment against Gandhi, since the movement was only postponed. Moreover, opinion in England was restive over Gandhi's continued freedom, and Montagu telegraphed early in February saying that he was "puzzled" at the delay in making the arrest. A debate was to take place in the Parliament (already reported above) and both Reading and Montagu were anxious that, as the arrest had to be made, it should be made in time for Parliament to be informed of it as a *fait accompli*. But, at this point, the Indian Members of the Viceroy's Council made the strongest possible representations in favour of delay, and Lord Reading, after careful thought, decided that the risks of a little delay were on the whole less than those of immediate action, which would be open to criticism in India and abroad. He postponed the arrest. It was, however, agreed that the Government of India would move again against Gandhi at a suitable moment. Gandhi had for a long time been expecting to be arrested.

"Rivers of bloodshed by the Government cannot frighten me", he said. The thing he feared was that the people might be carried away by news of his arrest. "I desire that the people should maintain perfect self-control and consider the day of my arrest, a day of rejoicing. The Government believes that I am the soul of all agitation and if I am removed it would be left in peace. The only thing that remains is for it to measure the strength of the people. Let the people preserve perfect peace and calmness. It is a matter of no pride or pleasure to me, but of humiliation, that the Government refrains from arresting"

me for fear of an outbreak of universal violence.

Rumour of his arrest began to grow and reached the Ashram where it was received with indifference. The daily routine was not disturbed in the least by these rumours.

Gandhi's chronicler proceeds:

Only when the evening came and the bell rang out the hour of prayer, there was a sudden hush all round as all inmates of the Ashram proceeded with anxious and hasty steps to join Gandhi in his last prayer, perhaps for a long time to come. At the prayer, he declared that he was expecting his arrest that very night. He then returned to his work as usual and dictated replies to some correspondence (the letter to me quoted above appeared to have been dictated at this time). Then he gave instructions to his colleagues about *Young India* after his arrest.

Gandhi arose at about quarter to ten for his last ablutions before retiring and the small assembly that had all this time surrounded him began to disperse. The police party then arrived in the Ashram and the Superintendent sent word to Gandhi that he could take as much time as he wanted. In the meanwhile, inmates of the Ashram had all come to Gandhi's hut. He had a word for each of them. Then he asked them to sing the song of Narsinh Mehta, the saint of Gujerat, depicting the qualities of a true Vaishnava. The song over, he blessed all; took his seat in the car kept ready for the purpose and was taken to the Sabarmati Jail on the night of Friday, 10 March. His wife Kasturba was allowed to accompany him as far as the Prison gates. Gandhi took with him an extra loin-cloth, two blankets and five books—the Gita, the Ramayan, Rodwell's translation of the Quran, the Ashram hymn-book, a copy of the Sermon on the Mount sent by school boys from California.

On the 11th at noon, Gandhi was placed before the Magistrate. The Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad, produced the Bombay Government authority to lodge a complaint for certain articles in *Young India*. Gandhi, who described himself as farmer and weaver by profession residing at the Sabarmati Ashram, said before the Magistrate "I simply wish to state that when the proper time comes, I shall plead guilty so far as disaffection towards the Government is concerned. It is quite true that I am the editor of *Young India* and that

the articles read in my presence were written by me and the proprietors and publishers had permitted me to control the whole policy of the paper."

The case was then committed to the Sessions. He was removed to the Sabarmati Jail where he was detained till the hearing which was to come off on 18 March. The week before the trial was passed in receiving visitors who were generally permitted to see Gandhi without restriction. My wife met him there and brought back a message of good wishes that I would soon recover from my illness and take part in my usual political activities.

After Gandhi's arrest, some friends wrote to me requesting that as I knew the details of the story of Gandhi's arrest due to his ultimatum to the Viceroy, I should contribute to their journals to make the public acquainted with the true facts.

On 25 February 1922, an important letter came to me from Motilal Ghose, the editor of the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta, in which he requested me to help him by frequent contributions in the conduct of his Paper in his declining health. Unfortunately I had to decline his request as I was then busy with important political matters. Another letter of equal importance came from Sarala Devi Choudhurani, which I am quoting below as it will prove interesting even at this date.

Lahore, 16th March, 1922.

Dear Mr. Jayakar,

We are intending to start a periodical in the Punjab from next week. As a leading public man I would like to have your views expressed in the first number of it as to—

- (1) who in your opinion—out of the living patriots—whether in or outside of jail—could be, can be or should be the immediate all-India leader after Mahatma Gandhi; and
- (2) whether you expect a clear division in the Non-co-operation camp in the matter of non-violence *versus* partly violence and partly non-violence, or violence pure and simple, as the means to be adopted for the attainment of Swaraj.

Having regard to this short notice, I do not expect a regular article from you, but I do expect a few clear definite lines in reply to my queries without delay.

Believing you won't fail me, with kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sarala Devi Choudhurani

My reply to this letter was as follows:

Bombay, 24th March, 1922

I am in receipt of your letter containing two inquiries which I proceed to answer as follows:

1. As regards the first, in my opinion, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is best fitted to lead the country after Gandhi. This seems also to be the Mahatma's own opinion, so far as it finds expression in his utterances communicated to the Press. The Pandit is an old and respected publicist, with great service and self-sacrifice behind him, is now a Congressman and in thorough sympathy with the national sentiments. He has now taken up the Mahatma's work and, as stated by him in his last speech in Bombay, he is at present concentrating all his efforts upon agitating the country to demand Dominion Status as soon as possible, according to a certain scheme which he told us was being got ready. He is no doubt, at variance with certain aspects of the non-co-operation programme, but that, in my opinion, does not affect his present position in the country.

2. As regards the second inquiry, I do not expect a division in the non-co-operation camp in the matter of violence against non-violence. Whatever else the Mahatma may not have succeeded in doing, he has certainly spiritualised our politics to the extent of proving that self-control is the first requisite of a people that aspire to be free. I understand, that a good deal of water has run under the bridge since last December and now non-violence has been accepted even by those who had at one time professed to doubt its utility. The Mahatma's removal from our midst, so far from diminishing the popularity of his doctrines, will secure them greater support and we are already witnesses to the extraordinary self-control and reserve which the entire country has shown since the time of his arrest. Whether the doctrine of non-violence will continue to retain its hold on the public mind in future is more than one can say at present. That will very largely depend upon the attitude which Government adopt towards Indian aspirations, and so far as the Mohamedans are concerned, it will be largely affected by the result of the Paris Conference to which all eyes are turned at present.

As stated before, Gandhi was allowed to continue his correspondence with friends under certain restrictions. On 12 March he wrote from the Sabarmati Jail to Hakim Ajmal Khan as follows. As this was an important letter written by Gandhi as to his official successor, its significant portions have been reproduced.

My dear Hakimji,

Since my arrest this is the first letter I have commenced to write after having ascertained that under the Jail Rules I am entitled to write as many letters as I like as an under-trial prisoner.

I write this to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Working Committee and, therefore, leader of both Hindus and Mussalmans or better still of all India.

I write to you also as one of the foremost leaders of Mussalmans, but above all I write this to you as an esteemed friend. I have had the privilege of knowing you since 1915. Our daily growing association has enabled me to prize your friendship as a treasure. A staunch Mussalman, you have shown in your own life what Hindu-Muslim unity means.

We all now realise, as we have never before realised, that without that unity we cannot attain our freedom, and I make bold to say that without that unity we must ever remain slaves. This unity, therefore, cannot be a mere policy to be discarded when it does not suit us. We can discard it only when we are tired of Swaraj. Hindu-Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances.

Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities, the Parsees, the Christians, the Jews or the powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall some day want to fight each other.

This unity in my opinion is unattainable without our adopting non-violence as a firm policy. I call it a policy because it is limited to the preservation of that unity. But it follows that thirty crores of Hindus and Mussalmans, united not for a time but for all time, can defy all the powers of the world and should consider it a cowardly act to resort to violence in their dealings with the English administrators. We have hitherto feared them and their guns in our simplicity. The moment we realise our combined strength, we shall consider it unmanly to fear them, and, therefore, ever to think of striking them. Hence am I anxious and impatient to persuade my countrymen to feel non-violent, not out of our weakness but out of our strength.

For this consummation we must, it seems to me, rely more upon quality than quantity. I would, therefore, beseech you and the members of the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee to see that our ranks contain no workers who do not fully realise the essential truth I have endeavoured to place before you. A living faith cannot be manufactured by the rule of majority.

To me the visible symbol of all-India unity and, therefore, of the acceptance of non-violence as an indispensable means for the realization of our political ambition, is undoubtedly the *Charkha*, i.e. *Khaddar*.

And it will be a recognition of a living kinship with the dumb masses. Nothing can possibly unify and revivify India as the acceptance by

all India of the spinning wheel as a daily sacrament and the 'khaddar' wear as a privilege and a duty. I would urge the nation to restrict its activity in this direction only to the consolidation of the results already achieved.

Moreover, the workers are too few. I would not waste a single worker today on destructive work when we have such an enormous amount of constructive work. But perhaps the most conclusive argument against devoting further time to destructive propaganda is the fact that the spirit of intolerance, which is a form of violence, has never been so rampant as now. Co-operators are estranged from us; they fear us. They say that we are establishing a worse bureaucracy than the existing one. We must remove every cause for such anxiety. We must go out of our way to win them to our side. We must make Englishmen safe from all harm from our side.

We do want to paralyse the Government considered as a system—not, however, by intimidation, but by the irresistible pressure of our innocence. In my opinion it would be intimidation to fill the jails anyhow. And why should more innocent men seek imprisonment till one, considered to be the most innocent, has been found inadequate for the purpose?

I have placed before you a programme which is in my opinion the quickest and the best. No impatient Khilafatist can devise a better one. May God give you health and wisdom to guide the country to her destined goal.

I am,
Yours sincerely
M. K. Gandhi

The country took the arrest in the spirit which Gandhi had enjoined. But Congress leaders were anxious to meet at Ahmedabad to consider the situation. Hakim Ajmal Khan, who was not able to be present at the Session of the All India Congress Committee, invited some friends to meet him at Ahmedabad. On 14 March Vallabhbhai Patel sent me the following telegram.

President Hakim Ajmal Khan requests you to come to Ahmedabad to meet him and other friends on the sixteenth for consultation.

Malaviyaji, just freed from the active conduct of his Conference, and wishing to be in Ahmedabad sent me the following wires from Delhi.

Hakim Ajmal Khan requires me Ahmedabad tomorrow to meet him

and other friends for consultation. Going there tonight. Wish I could meet you and Natrajan there.

He followed it by another wire on the 15th.

In view of new developments necessary we should meet at Ahmedabad twenty-first to discuss situation with selected members legislature and other friends. Request you come. Letter follows.

Unfortunately as I was still confined to bed, I could not attend Hakim Ajmal Khan's meeting at Ahmedabad but I heard later that they considered the situation and decided to follow Gandhi's advice and remain calm and non-violent.

While this was going on on 6 March, 1922 Satyamurti wrote to me as follows:

Messrs. Rangaswami Aiyangar, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and myself have discussed the situation quite frankly. Rangaswami and myself clearly are of opinion that a new party—a minority party within the Congress, should be formed concentrating on normal political activities both at home and abroad. Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar is wholly sympathetic but would wait a little longer before he makes up his mind. We hope to persuade him to join the party and, in the meanwhile, to take an attitude of benevolent neutrality. Mr. S. Shrinivas Aiyengar has hopelessly gone over to the other side. These are some samples of his latest outburst. "Non-co-operation as planned and conditioned by Gandhi and the Congress is only a *partial and pleasurable* non-co-operation. A race of practical idealists—determined, active, vigilant—has to come into existence. The new nationalism is a great religious movement, incredibly swift of force and inexorable in its grip in brain and heart." So you see we must class him along with Das, Nehru *et hoc genus omne*. I believe our (Malaviya) Committee ought to take the initiative and summon a representative Conference at Bombay open to the Press and not open to the Gandhites, the Liberal Leaguers but open only to dissentient Congressmen and Independents, to discuss and settle on the future programme of political work. That seems to me the most hopeful way. What do Malaviya and Jinnah think? Please tell them that time is one thing and eternity is another. I think it is already late and unless we act promptly, we shall lose the initiative.

To similar effect was a letter of 7 March received from Rangaswami Aiyangar from Madras.

I trust you have received Mr. Satyamurti's letter yesterday which will indicate to you the position here.

I think a preliminary Conference is essential, but I am anxious that it should be summoned as informally as possible and that the test should be applied only in choosing the list of people to be summoned and not in defining their exact political complexion. If the lists are made out, we can easily decide as to who are likely to agree to be together or to differ or who are likely to help and not to hinder or to obstruct the objects we have in view. Of course the invitations must be confined to those who are in the Congress or who accept the Congress creed.

However the views of C. Vijayaraghavachariar, the veteran Congressman of Salem appeared to me to be more sound. He wrote to me from Salem on 6 March 1922.

I am really unable to see my way to think of offering my suggestions about the formation of a new party, for the simple reason that I am unable to be convinced what it can be like, what may be its objects and activities and above all, what would be its "sanction", that is to say what are the means by which its objects can be secured from amongst unwilling and militant Bureaucracy and the all-powerful non-official exploiters. I would wish that we waited for a calmer and more settled atmosphere. You know that I am for economic boycott as the only peaceful and effective sanction. But the Mahatma is making experiments and is in possession of practically the whole country. I am fairly certain that we should soon have passed this uncertain and disquieting stage caused by him and more by the trustees of law and order. Let us wait for God's sake. In the meanwhile, I want to have a clear and definite idea of principle and programmes of the new party proposed by some.

As already stated above, Jinnah had sometime previously the same idea in his mind, which both Natarajan and myself rejected. After this correspondence we had a Conference in Bombay—Malaviya, Natarajan and myself, and we agreed that the times were inopportune for the formation of such a party and the idea, therefore, was dropped for the moment. We realised that while Gandhi was in danger, it would be wrong to start a new party, which was sure to have the effect of strengthening Government's hands against him.

But matters soon reached a decisive stage, for, on the 18th Gandhi was placed on trial before Broomfield, I.C.S., District and Sessions Judge at Ahmedabad. Strangman, an Advocate of Bombay, conducted the prosecution, while Gandhi was undefended. The Judge corrected a slight mistake in the

charges which were then read out, the offence, as stated above, being three articles in *Young India* viz., "Tampering with loyalty", "The Puzzle and its solution", "Shaking the Manes", the last article being a reply to Montagu's and Birkenhead's boastful warnings about the alleged "hard fibre" of the British, "the most determined people in the world". The Judge explained the charge as that of bringing or attempting to bring into hatred or contempt or exciting or attempting to excite disaffection towards His Majesty's Government established by law in British India. The charges were under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code. After the charges had been read out, the Judge called upon Gandhi to plead to the charges. Gandhi said "I plead guilty to all the charges" repeating what he had stated before the committing Magistrate. "I observe," he said, "that the King's name had been omitted from the charges and it has been properly omitted." The Judge wished to give his verdict immediately as Gandhi had pleaded guilty but the prosecuting Advocate insisted that the procedure should be carried out in full. He then made references to the occurrences in Bombay, Malabar and Chauri Chaura, leading to what he called rioting and murder. He admitted, that in the articles complained of, non-violence was insisted upon as an item of the campaign and of the creed, but he added, "of what value is it to insist on non-violence, if incessantly disaffection is preached towards Government which is held up as a treacherous Government and an open and deliberate attempt is made to instigate to overthrow it?" He asked the Judge to take these circumstances into account in passing the sentence on the accused.

The Court then asked Gandhi, "Do you wish to make any statement on the question of sentence?" Gandhi said that he would like to do so. The Court then asked whether Gandhi could give the statement in writing, to put it on record. Gandhi agreed. Before reading his statement Gandhi spoke a few words as introductory remarks.

Before I read the statement I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned advocate's remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this Court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has almost become a passion with me, and the Advocate is entirely in the right when he says that

my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with *Young India* but that it commenced much earlier. It is a painful duty with me, but I have to discharge that duty, knowing the responsibility that rests upon my shoulders, and I wish to endorse all the blame that the learned Advocate has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay occurrences, Madras occurrences and the Chauri Chaura occurrences. Thinking over these things deeply and sleeping over them night after night, it is impossible for me to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages of Bombay. The learned Advocate is quite right when he says, that as a man of responsibility, a man having received a fair share of education, having had a fair share of experience of this world, I should have known the consequences of every one of my acts. I know them. I knew that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and if I was set free I would still do the same. I have felt it this morning that I would have failed in my duty, if I did not say what I said here just now.

I wanted to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people, bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad. I am deeply sorry for it and I am, therefore, here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime, and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. But by the time I have finished with my statement, you will have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk which a sane man can run.

Gandhi then read out a long statement prefacing it with the comment:

I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England, to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up, that I should explain why from a staunch loyalist and co-operator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator. To the Court too, I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.

My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and an Indian I had no rights. More correctly, I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian. But I was not baffled. I thought that this

treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticising it freely where I felt it was faulty but never wishing its destruction. Consequently when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it, raised a Volunteer Ambulance Corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith. Similarly in 1906, at the time of the Zulu revolt, I raised a Stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the "rebellion". On both the occasions, I received Medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa, I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-I-Hind Gold Medal. When the War broke out in 1914 between England and Germany, I raised a Volunteer Ambulance Corps in London, consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students. Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly, in India when a special appeal was made at the War Conference in Delhi in 1918 by Lord Chelmsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a Corps in Kheda, and the response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all these efforts at service, I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen.

The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act—a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors, beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and culminating in crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations. But, in spite of the forebodings and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919, I fought for co-operation and working the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed, and that the Reforms, inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India.

But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was white-washed and most culprits went not only unpunished but remained in service, and some continued to draw pensions from Indian Revenue and, in some cases, were even rewarded. I saw too that not only did the Reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggression. So much is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations, before she can achieve

Dominion Status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages, just the supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources. This cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless human processes as described by English witnesses. Little do town dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter; that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realise that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures, can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity, which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiased examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases, has led me to believe that at least 95 per cent of the convictions were wholly bad. My experience of political cases in India leads me to the conclusion that in 9 out of every 10, the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in the love of their country. In 99 cases out of 100, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do with such cases. In my opinion, the administration of the law is thus prostituted, consciously or unconsciously, for the benefit of the exploiter. The greater misfortune is that of the Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many Englishmen and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world and that India is making steady though slow progress. They do not know a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organized display of force on the one hand, and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This awful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124A under which I am happily charged, is perhaps the Prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code, designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system, one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite violence. But the Section under which I am charged is one under which more promotion of disaffection

is a crime. I have studied some of the cases tried under it; and I know that some of the most loved of Indian patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege therefore, to be charged under that Section. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill-will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person but I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British Rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system and it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing, in non-co-operation, the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But, in the past, non-co-operation had been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil, and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country, and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal.

As Gandhi admitted his guilt the trial lasted only for a hundred minutes and then the Judge gave his verdict as follows:

Mr. Gandhi, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless, what remains, namely, the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a Judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that, in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great

patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics, look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only. It is not my duty and I do not presume to judge or criticise you in any other character. It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who, by his own admission has broken the law and committed what, to an ordinary man, must appear to be grave offence against the State. I do not forget that you consistently preached against violence, and that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence. But having regard to the nature of your political teaching, and the nature of many of those to whom it was addressed, how you could have continued to believe that violence would not be the inevitable consequence, it passes my capacity to understand.

There are probably few people in India who do not sincerely regret that you should have made it impossible for any Government to leave you at liberty. But it is so. I am trying to balance what is due to you against what appears to me to be necessary, in the interest of the public, and I propose, in passing sentence, to follow the precedent of a case in many respects similar to this case, that was decided some 12 years ago. I mean the case against Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak under the same Section. The sentence that was passed upon him, as it finally stood, was a sentence of simple imprisonment for six years. You will not consider it unreasonable, I think, that you should be classed with Mr. Tilak, that is a sentence of two years' simple imprisonment on each count of the charge, that is six years in all, which I feel it my duty to pass upon you. And I should like to say in doing so, that if the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.

Gandhi responded to the courtesy of the Judge's verdict and said:

I would say one word. Since you have done me the honour of recalling the trial of the late Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, I just want to say that I consider it to be the proudest privilege and honour to be associated with his name. So far as the sentence itself is concerned, I certainly consider that it is as light as any judge would inflict on me; and so far as the whole proceedings are concerned, I must say that I could not have expected greater courtesy.

In the eyes of many Indians this trial presented many similarities to what had happened, centuries ago, in a different land and in a different age, when a similar drama was enacted

and another personality was convicted for spreading a similar gospel of freedom, with similar courage, viz., the trial of Jesus Christ for "approaching the poor with the mind of the poor". As a poetic member of the Congress, Mrs. Naidu, stated on the occasion in a tribute to Gandhi:

The most epic event of modern times ended quickly. The pent-up emotion of the people burst in a storm of sorrow, as a long, slow procession moved towards Gandhi in a mournful pilgrimage of farewell, clinging to the hands that had toiled so incessantly, bowing over the feet that had journeyed so continuously in the service of his country. In the midst of all this poignant scene of many-voiced and myriad-hearted grief, he stood, untroubled, in all his transcendent simplicity, the embodied symbol of the Indian Nation—its living sacrifice and sacrament in one.

They might take the Mahatma to the utmost ends of the earth, but his destination remains unchanged in the hearts of his people who are both the heirs and the stewards of his matchless dreams and his matchless deeds.

There was grief in my house when my wife returned giving a painful description of the scenes at Ahmedabad. My own tribute to Gandhi was communicated to the Press as follows:

I think the arrest and conviction of Mahatma Gandhi, at this crisis, is a great blunder. It shows how deplorably ignorant the Government in this country are of the deep currents of feeling running in the minds of the people, whom they are called upon to govern. Mr. Gandhi was no doubt a bold and unsparing critic of the present system of administration, but, in all his hostility and opposition to it, he was singularly free from the taint of personal bitterness or race animosity, which are, after all, the two great dangers which Government, by their attitude of callous disregard for the public sentiment, are helping to make more and more imminent. It is a mistake to suppose that the discontent and resentment of which Government can form no adequate conception in their superior isolation—was of the Mahatma's making. He only reflected, in this behalf, the national sentiment of wounded honour and self respect. The indignation had been created by causes anterior to the Mahatma's descent into the political life of this country. It was entirely the creation of a policy of persistent and arrogant disregard of popular sentiment. What, however, steeled Mr. Gandhi's heart against bureaucratic mis-rule was the "blood and iron" administration of Martial Law by "the Strong Man of the Punjab." The daily repetition of the stories of heartless cruelty practised in the name of "law and order," the helpless humiliation which

he saw in the victims of the crawling and the flogging orders, and of the notorious massacre at the celebrated Bagh—these were enough to turn a loyalist into a Non-co-operator. As in his case, the sight of the Punjab blood has been responsible for many a violent conversion of honest political faith. But, to the credit of the Mahatma, it must be said that, in his case, his indignation did not deteriorate into a hatred of the *men* or of the *race* responsible for the bloodshed and dishonour, but was simply directed towards the *system of rule* of which these ghastly incidents were, in his opinion, the most natural outcome.

I shudder to think what form the deeply stirred sentiments of the people would have taken, what orgies of violent and brutal reprisals would have been perpetrated by Indians, if the Mahatma had not stepped into the breach at the right moment and by sweet and angelic teachings, and his own personal example, transmuted the popular feeling of resentment into the impulse of self-sacrifice and self-exertion working at a high level of patriotism. It was impossible for him to control the onrush of this mighty wave of resentment. But he wisely directed it against the *system* of rule and thus saved from harm the *race* and the *persons* who were responsible for the dishonour of Indians. How often he has, by his clear reasoning, his inexhaustible store of facts and arguments, his appeals to the past history of the country and to the basic principles of Indian culture, turned away many an indignant young man from the path of violence, can only be known to those who have shared with him his daily toils. It can never be understood by those who have presumed to judge of him from the editor's chair or from the safe distance of hostile anonymity, to which some responsible Anglo-Indian newspapers in Bombay and outside had thrown open their wide columns. What vile calumnies were written about him from day to day, and what a campaign of personal abuse carried on in the columns of papers which often posed themselves as pattern of journalistic decorum.

This shower of calumny has not been without its effect. Government have felt bolder and bolder every day, and, with the weakening of his influence amongst a section of his followers, due, no doubt, to the change of programme at Bardoli, they gathered sufficient courage to lay their hands on him. But, in doing so, they have taken away their best ally for peace and non-violence in the land.

It is now an open secret that a few days before his arrest, he visited Ajmer and saved it by his sweet persuasiveness from the possibility of a violent outburst. That he should have been arrested for incitement to violence only two days after such meritorious services, only illustrates the enormous gulf that divides the people and their rulers in their thoughts and sentiments. It shows in what a cloud-land of unrealities, the Government habitually live. Even the trying Judge was compelled to remark that in the eyes of millions of his countrymen the

Mahatma was a great patriot and a great leader and even in the opinion of those who differed from him in politics, he was a man of high ideals and noble and even saintly life. That such a man, whom the world would delight to honour has to be sent to jail for his opposition to the methods of British Rule is a condemnation which even this system of Government, strong as it is in its loyal Councils and its 62 crores of annual military equipment, cannot long survive. History records that in ancient times no great edifice—be it a bridge, a palace or a tank—could arise except on foundations which were firmly laid on the sacrifice of a dearly loved object. Though the human race has travelled far from this untutored age of cruel and harsh practices, we have not yet emerged from the barbarism of mind, which demands the sacrifice of a great and dearly loved fellow-being as the price of awakening the public conscience to the realization of habitual wrongs. The world has often passed by a heinous wrong, in ignorance or contempt, until the sacrifice of a high life was offered as a price for its attention. India's freedom has perhaps, in Divine Wisdom, needed the sacrifice of one who was the soul of the Nation's honour and the noblest product of its culture and patriotism. I have no doubt that our countrymen will bear this crisis with unruffled calm, but I have equally no doubt that many high-placed men, controlling the policy of the present Government, will misinterpret our calm attitude as arising out of timidity and fright. The country is quiet today, not because its indignation is unreal or superficial. Not even because the vulgar threats of "hard fibre" of "the most determined people in the world" have frightened the Indian people. It is quiet because it wants to respect the memory of its great Leader, by proving itself to be worthy of his teaching that self-control is the first requisite of a people that aspire to be free.

The trial has not been without its effects. It has enabled Englishmen to discover to what heights of simplicity, courage and tenderness an Indian can rise. I understand that no less than four Englishmen were present at the trial, including the Judge and the Advocate-General. I congratulate them. They got the chance of their life-time—of seeing a true Indian—so different from the specimens they usually meet in their clubs, dinners, court-houses or Council Halls. Let them go and proclaim to their friends the Indian they have seen. It is a pity that the Ruler of the Province missed the chance. He would have learnt, in a few hours, what his five or more years of Council Hall experience will never teach him—he would have seen an Indian, as he can be in his own setting of spirituality and culture, reposeful in the confidence and affection of his countrymen. He would have realised that "Sport Clubs" and "Government Houses" do not breed the right species.

After Gandhi's conviction there was considerable activity in Congress circles. The Working Committee was busy

for about three months in adjusting financial matters and the confirmation of principles and policies. After due deliberation, it passed the following Resolution on 10 June 1922.

Whereas repression in severe form has been resorted to by the Government in several Provinces of the country, in spite of the suspension of all aggressive activities, this Committee is of opinion that Civil Disobedience will have to be undertaken to enable the country to enforce its demands and accordingly calls upon Provincial Committees to make greater efforts in working the constructive programme by the 30th September 1922, when the situation will be considered by this Committee and the question of launching Civil Disobedience would be finally determined.

On 7, 8 and 9 June 1922, the All-India Congress Committee met at Lucknow to take stock of the circumstances, to readjust Congress affairs, to re-examine the fundamentals as regards their suitability under the changing conditions of public sentiment. One such notable change is testified to by a loyal Congress Chronicler as follows:

We need not make unnecessary secret of the simple fact that the top-notch politicians of the Congress, who were reluctant converts but warm apostles of Non-co-operation, were in favour of changing faith on its orthodox lines and professing a protestant creed that would carry Non-co-operation into the very aisles and chancels of the Bureaucratic Church. They wanted to beard the lion in its own den and carry Non-co-operation into the very citadels of Provincial Governments.

In bringing about this change, I and my friends of Maharashtra had a great deal to do, although in Congress narratives it is usual to ignore our work and to give credit to more popular Congress leaders. Maharashtra never had much faith in the boycott of legislative bodies and a change in this vital matter had been persistently advocated at Congress Sessions and in public meetings in Maharashtra held from time to time. As a result of the change of feeling the All-India Congress Committee passed a Resolution loyally confirming the previous policy and adjourning to the month of August the consideration of the question relating to Civil Disobedience. In the meanwhile, they appointed a Committee called "The Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee" consisting of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Ansari,

Vithalbhai Patel and Kasturiranga Aiyengar, to report on the political situation in the country, with special reference to the starting of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

In response to the public sentiment desiring to know the true state of things relating to the Non-co-operation Programme, this Committee felt it to be its duty to make a very thorough enquiry with the view of finding out what change, if any, had occurred in public sentiment. The procedure followed by the Committee, as stated in their Report, was as follows.

In taking evidence, the Committee first called for written answers to the questions published in the Press and supplied to the various Congress Committees and then examined such witnesses *viva voce* as offered themselves. The Committee observed that:

They have shut out no evidence of any kind offered to them and the opinions collected were fairly representative of all shades of political thought within the Congress. Altogether answers were received from 459 witnesses, of whom 366 were orally examined by the Committee, the remaining 93 did not attend. The *viva voce* examination was conducted *in camera* for the obvious reason that an enquiry of this kind was, in its very nature, of a confidential character. We preserved this character with a view to encourage the witnesses to speak out their candid opinions without let or hindrance.

If there was room in this short narrative, the reproduction of some typical questions put to important witnesses by the members of the committee would have been found very interesting.

After considering answers obtained on the questionnaire, the Committee proceeded to write a report in which they stated that they had gone on tour to important centres of Congress activity, addressed public meetings, the audience often extending beyond 30,000 persons.

The Report which was a very important document began by tracing the history of the Non-co-operation movement from stage to stage. In the course of its comments, the Committee had a fling at the Maharashtrian followers of Tilak and Gokhale who, the Committee thought, were opposed to the Gandhian Non-co-operation programme and to convince such doubters, the Committee proceeded to refer to a speech of Gokhale delivered as President of the Benares Congress in

1905. The speech was as follows:

If men whom any other country would delight to honour, are to be thus made to realise the utter humiliation and helplessness of their position in their own country, then all I can say is: Good-bye to all hope of co-operating in any way with the Bureaucracy in the interests of the people. I can conceive of no great indictment of British rule than that such a state of things should be possible after a hundred years of that rule.

Another speech of Gokhale's was quoted which he made in the year 1909 in moving the resolution at the Lahore Congress regarding Indians in South Africa:

What is the passive resistance struggle? It is essentially defensive in its nature and it fights with moral and spiritual weapons. A passive resister resists tyranny by undergoing suffering in his own person. He pits soul-force against brute-force in man. He pits suffering against oppression, pits conscience against might; he pits faith against injustice; right against wrong.

The Committee proceeded to observe:

We have carefully investigated the causes of the apparent set-back and have unhesitatingly arrived at the conclusion that it was due almost entirely to a want of adequate faith in the Constructive Programme on the part of a large number of workers whose business it was to carry it out. In the disappointment of a sudden check of enthusiasm, the great potentialities of that programme were overlooked and it was assumed that there was no urgency about it, as it involved steady work extending over years. This apathy of the workers was reflected to a degree in the general public but the faith of the latter in the Congress and the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi remained unshaken.

As regards boycott of Government Schools and Colleges, the Committee observed with equal frankness:

While some of the students who had come out of Government Schools, joined the National Schools and Colleges or became Congress workers, the majority was obliged to return gradually to their old schools owing to the unfortunate paucity of National Institutions.

As regards such paucity of Institutions, the Committee stated:

We have already adverted to the inadequacy of National educational institutions to meet the large demand made on them. The very nature of the struggle precluded the thorough organization of National Colleges and Schools, but the enthusiasm of the students and of the teachers kept these institutions going, however inefficient and inadequate they were. The Bardoli Resolutions rightly stopped all active propaganda against Government educational institutions and directed the various Congress bodies to improve the quality of education, to better the organization of National institutions in order to attract students from the Government Colleges and Schools. The present conditions of the National institutions all over the country is far from satisfactory. They are all working heroically under great disadvantages and disabilities. The teachers receive a bare living wage. The buildings are mostly rented and are unsuitable. In most cases the syllabus of studies is identical with that of the Government institutions, with the exception of the *Charkha*, the hand-loom and the compulsory learning of Hindi. Almost every institution visited by us was in financial distress.

It may be fitting to recall here the attention of readers to my comments in a previous chapter pointing out how my attempt to start a large College in Bombay was ruined partially by the agitation carried on by some Congress members that building up of National Schools and Colleges was not within the programme of the Congress which consisted only in destroying Government institutions but not in supplying substitutes for them for the benefit of the students. It will also be recalled how I had to controvert this view in a letter to the Press. These findings of the Committee were, therefore, in my opinion a wholesome change.

As regards the boycott of Courts and of practising of lawyers, the Committee stated:

What we have said about students, schools and colleges, applies *mutatis mutandis* to lawyers, litigants and Law Courts. If success is to be measured by the number of lawyers and litigants abstaining from resorting to the Courts, it must, as in the case of students, be admitted that this item of the programme has failed. While the principle on which the boycott of Courts was based was perfectly sound, we feel constrained to say that it had been carried to undesirable lengths in practice. There could be no doubt that practising lawyers who adopted the Congress Creed were fully entitled to join all the component parts of the organization and to hold offices to which they might be selected by the free exercise of the franchise. There was no disqualification placed on them by the Congress but the Mahatma advised them to

be content with the part of unseen actors behind the scenes, and this advice was interpreted by most enthusiastic Committees as placing a ban on practising lawyers; and some Provinces actually framed rules disqualifying lawyers from holding any office. This in itself would be strong enough reason for all self-respecting practising lawyers to keep outside the Congress against their own inclination, but the unpardonable discourtesy with which they came to be generally treated effectually shut them out from all public activity. The movement thus lost the support of the most efficient body of men, by what could only be characterised as an entirely false step. There was no reason why a wholesale importer of foreign cloth should be freely admitted into all Congress organizations and even to responsible offices under it, whilst respected practising lawyers, known for their special aptitude for public work, were studiously and sometimes offensively excluded.

I may observe here that in my letters to Gandhi and in personal talks, this was exactly the point I presented to him asking for the alleviation of the position to which lawyers had been reduced by his propaganda.

As regards Panchayats which were to be a substitute for the British Courts, the Committee observed:

The evidence shows that in the Punjab, Bengal and Bihar a number of Panchayats were still working more or less satisfactorily; but on the whole, the attempt to have any proper substitute for the existing Courts had undoubtedly failed—thanks to the zeal of the agents of Law and Order. In some places the scope and functions of Panchayats were wholly misunderstood and a complicated system in close imitation of the procedure obtaining in the British Courts, involving appeals, reviews of judgment, revision of orders and the appointment of judicial and ministerial staffs was evolved by some legal genius. Such a system was foredoomed to failure and the wonder is that it worked well for a time.

As regards the use of *Khaddar*, the Committee were of opinion:

The great demand for *Khaddar* has tempted foreign manufacturers and local dealers to introduce a foreign substitute for *Khaddar* in the Indian markets and the fraud has been so cleverly carried out that it defies detection. The *Khaddar* Depots in larger towns easily lent themselves to this fraud, as the demand on them was great and the sources of supply were limited. Not many of the numerous *Khadi* Bhandars dotting the whole country dealt exclusively in the genuine stuff. Indeed it has now become impossible to say with certainty of

any particular piece that it is *shuddha* Khaddar without elaborate enquiries, the result of the majority of which, was highly unsatisfactory.

Coming to the question, which, at that time, was raging in the public mind viz. the boycott of Councils and its removal, I may observe that I had stated my views on this point *inter alia* in my letter to Gandhi quoted above. The observations of the Committee were consequently most opportune, having regard to that controversy. As stated above, for a long time I had not supported this part of the Congress programme. In fact, agitation in Maharashtra had grown wide and constituted a courageous beginning of opposition to such boycott. Congress writers did not give to Maharashtrian leaders the credit they deserved in this connection, showering their praises upon great Congress leaders from the North, who visualised its effect at a much later date and as a consequence of an agitation in Maharashtra. I am not, therefore, quoting here the answers given by Maharashtrian leaders, for, from what I have stated in the previous Chapters of this narrative, their views must be equally well known to my readers, but I shall quote the opinions of two, among others, of the Madras Congress leaders eminent at that time for their loyalty to the Gandhi programme.

A. Rangaswami Iyengar who had always enjoyed the reputation of being an honest, sincere and loyal follower of Gandhi, stated as follows.

The actual questions are quoted below to enable the reader to judge their trend:

MOTILAL NEHRU (Member of the Committee): But the whole question and the principal reason for not going into the Councils is that you will, by entering the Councils, be frittering away your energies on side issues and little things, and lose sight of the real objective.

MR. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR: My own feeling is that by doing these little things in the Councils, we will be very much assisted in the Congress work than otherwise.

MR. RAJAGOPALACHARI: I am asking you what you will recommend me to do if I stand for a seat in the Council? Am I to move proposals in connection with subjects such as Education and Land Revenue?

ANSWER: In so far as they are intended to carry out the Congress programme and for removal of injustice.

QUESTION: If good measures are brought by Government and are oppos-

ed on account of party or vested interest, shall we strengthen the hands of Government?

ANSWER: We ought to support the Government in preventing the evil.

QUESTION: We should not take up an attitude of total obstruction.

ANSWER: No.

Satyamurti of equal eminence replied to the questions as follows:

MR. RAJAGOPALACHARI: I believe you are out for total obstruction.

MR. SATYAMURTI: I shall be for anything which leads to Swaraj. I do not decide.

QUESTION: I wish to know whether anything more can be done by way of pledges or mandates?

ANSWER: I think they degrade humanity. It really promotes hypocrisy. I am not in favour of Congress mandates or pledges from the Council Candidates.

MR. KASTURI RANGA IYENGAR: You will take up whatever measure you consider necessary in order to attain Swaraj, irrespective of the principles of Non-Co-operation?

ANSWER: Yes.

On this and similar evidence, which it is needless to detail the Committee opined as follows:

Notwithstanding the opinion of Congressmen to the contrary, our colleagues hold that a lead must be given to the country in the direction of the entry into Councils.

In presenting their report, the Committee remarked:

It has fallen to us to examine the magnificent work of the greatest man of the age now resting behind the walls of the Yeravda Prison. The gravity of our task, apparent as it was at the outset, impressed us more and more strongly as we proceeded with the inquiry. At every step, we realized the invaluable guidance afforded by the general plan so carefully worked out by the masterful genius, who, till recently, directed the campaign in person. We were naturally reluctant to put it lightly away in his absence from the field of operations. Great, however, as is our respect and admiration for Mahatma Gandhi, we have not allowed it to come in the way of our clear duty. We have approached his work with reverence but have examined it with care. We have endeavoured to face existing conditions with an open mind, controlled only by our unshakable faith in the high purpose of the great movement. We have wholly discountenanced open revolts against

a general scheme of non-violent non-co-operation and utter subservience to the minutest details at the other.

The Report proceeds to state:

Times have now changed. Circumstances have altered. The period of the struggle is indefinitely prolonged. The boycott of Courts, Schools and Colleges has been relaxed by Mahatmaji at Bardoli. The question of Councils was not then a live issue. We have since passed through further vicissitudes and are now in a position to take stock of the situation. We must therefore, adjust our programme accordingly. We are bound to recognize that the Legislatures have it in their power to render pleasant or unpleasant, easy or burdensome, the position of a non-co-operator. The Council may not be an assembly, we readily grant, which can be used by itself for the overthrow of the existing system but as long as the system remains, it would be unwise not to recognise the possibilities for evil, if not for good, of a "representative house". Assuming that the Council cannot do any good, it cannot be denied that it can, and is doing immense harm. Apart from the support, direct or indirect, the Moderates have given to the repressive policy of the Government and the imposition of fresh taxation, their very entry into the Councils for co-operation with Government is harmful. It is obvious that if they had stood by the country during the November-December crisis, the struggle would have assumed a different aspect. We know that they are not the representatives of the people, but we also know that they pose and are represented to the outside world by Government as such. It is abundantly clear that the Councils have, in the name of law and order, strengthened the hands of the Government in repressing the non-co-operation movement.

Referring to the large number of witnesses who favoured Council Entry, the Committee remarked:

The net result of the evidence on the whole question of entry into the Councils given by an imposing array of 302 witnesses examined in the light of cold reason, is that there is a good deal of honest misapprehension of the true bearings of the question in the country. Many of them have so accustomed themselves to think of the Councils as a contamination that they are unable to consider any proposal relating to them on the merits. Most of those who are prepared to discuss the question are either compelled to modify their original opinions beyond recognition or find themselves landed in absurdities. Some few have no doubt maintained their ground but it will almost invariably be found that they have done so on the basis of assumptions, the justification for which it is not always easy to discover. At the

back of it all, there is a vague undefined fear of some dire catastrophe befalling the nation, the moment non-co-operators enter the Councils, even though it be to end them. There is enough material in the evidence to indicate what is the true lead required by the country but the bare opinions of the witnesses, apart from the reasons on which they are based, do not carry us far.

The detailed recommendations of the Committee were as follows:

1. *Civil Disobedience*

- (a) The country is not prepared at present to embark upon general mass Civil Disobedience of a limited character, e.g. the breaking of a particular law or the non-payment of a particular tax for which the people are ready. We recommend that Provincial Committees be authorized to sanction such limited mass Civil Disobedience on their own responsibility, if the conditions laid down by the All-India Congress Committee in that behalf are fulfilled.
- (b) We recommend the restoration of Resolution No. 2 passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi, on the 14th and 15th Nov which gives Provincial Committees all the powers necessary to determine upon a resort to Civil Disobedience of any kind whatever, by cancelling Cl. 1 in Resolution 1 passed on the 24th and 25th February to the extent it conflicts with that Resolution; provided that general mass Civil Disobedience is not permissible.

2. *Entry into Legislative Councils*

- (a) The Congress and the Khilafat at their Gaya Session (proposed to be called at the end of the year) should declare that, in view of the fact that, the working of the Legislative Councils during their first term has, besides proving a great obstacle to the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the speedy attainment of Swarajya, caused great hardship and misery to the people, it is desirable that the following steps should be taken in strict accordance with the principles of non-violent Non-Co-operation to avoid the recurrence of the evil:
 - (i) Non-co-operators should contest the election on the issue of the redress of the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and immediate Swarajya, and make every endeavour to be returned in a majority.
 - (ii) If the Non-co-operators are returned in a majority large enough to prevent a quorum, they should, after taking their seats, leave the Council Chamber in a body and take no part in the proceedings for the rest of the term. They should attend the Councils

occasionally, only for the purpose of preventing vacancies.

- (iii) If Non-co-operators are returned in a majority which is not large enough to prevent quorum, they should oppose every measure of the Government including the Budget, and only move Resolutions for the redress of the aforesaid wrongs and the immediate attainment of Swarajya.
- (iv) If the Non-co-operators are returned in a majority, they should act as pointed out in No. 2 and thus materially reduce the strength of the Council.

As the new Councils will not assemble till January 1924, we further propose that the Congress Session of 1923 be held during the first instead of the last week of December and the matter be again brought up for the issue of a final Mandate by the Congress in view of the election.

[Note: (a) This was recommended jointly by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Pandit Motilal Nehru and V. J. Patel. As against this, Dr. Ansari, C. Rajagopalachari, S. Kasturiranga Iyengar held, (b) there should be no change of the Congress Programme in respect of the boycott of Councils.]

3. *Boycott of Government Educational Institutions*

We recommend a strict adherence to the Bardoli Resolution in regard to those by suspending for the present active propaganda calling upon boys to come out of schools and colleges. As required by that Resolution, reliance should be placed upon the Superiority of National schools for drawing scholars from Government Institutions and not upon picketing or other aggressive propaganda. . . . (Unanimous)

[This was a most significant change, for, as stated above, only a few months before this date Vithalbhai Patel and others had led a violent campaign in favour of more destruction, advocating that the starting of National schools and colleges had no place in the Congress Programme.]

4. *Boycott of Courts by Litigants and Lawyers*

Effort should be concentrated on the establishment of Panchayats and cultivation of a strong public opinion in their favour.

We further recommend that all existing disqualifications imposed on practising lawyers should be removed. . . . [Unanimous]

[This was another significant change from the previous view that lawyers were worse than cobblers].

5. *Boycott of British Goods*

- (a) We accept the principle and recommend that the whole question

be referred to a Committee of experts for a full report to be submitted before the Congress meets.

(All members except C. Rajagopalachari).

- (b) There is no objection to the collection and examination of facts by experts, but the acceptance of the principle by the All-India Congress Committee would mislead the nation and injure the movement.

[C. Rajagopalachari]

Thus ended the labours of this famous Committee on which served some of the most distinguished leaders of the Congress. Their courage in frankly and fearlessly revising the work done in the name of Non-co-operation and stating their conclusions with characteristic clarity, proved to men like me, that, in spite of the sweeping tide, in many respects blind, irrational and destructive, of conservative non-co-operation, the race of old leaders of independence and rationality had fortunately not become extinct.

How the clear findings of this Committee affected the political situation in the country and led to a rational reorientation of the non-co-operation programme will be revealed in the later chapters of this narrative.



INDEX

- ABHINAVA BHARAT, 116
 Adams, Capt., 233
Advocate of India, 168
 Aga Khan (late), 44
 Agarkar, 93
 Ahmedabad, 486
 Ahmedkhan, Sultan, 276
 Aiyar, C. P. Ramaswamy, 193; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 201, 203
 Aiyar, K. S., 245
 Aiyar, Sadashiv, 522
 Aiyar, Sheshgiri, 544
 Ajgaonkar, A. R., 134, 387
 Akola Conference, 481
 Ali, Bande, 186
 Ali Brothers, 447, 448, 449, 475, 509, 533
 Ali, Mohomed, 133, 311, 447, 448, 533
 Ali, Shaukat, 386, 447, 448, 509, 533
 Allahabad, 86
 Alverstone, Lord, Chief Justice, 54
 Ambashankar, Harilal 7
Amrit Bazar Patrika, 577, 589
 Amritsar, 286, 298
 Andrews, C. F., 501
 Ancy, M. S., 204, 450
 Anklesaria, 327
 Ansari, Dr., 450, 613; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 202, 203; member, Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee, 604
 Apte, Mahadeo Chinnaji, 2
 Apte, V. G., 134
 Arundale, George, 170
 Aryan Brotherhood, 123
 Aryan Education Society, 27, 28, 31
 Asquith, 1
 Associated Newspaper Company, 247
 Associated Press, 335
 Aston, 93
 Athalye, A. S., 31
 Atmaram, Sir Vijbhunkandas, 27
 Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, 406
 Bajaj, Jamnalal, 375, 406, 436, 450, 558
 Balchandra, Dr., 27
 Balgandharva (Narayanrao Rajahansa), 186, 436
 Balibhadra, Pandurang, 2
 Banaras, 76
 Banerji, Gurudas, 261
 Banker, Shankarlal, 133, 552
 Bannerji, Surendranath, 209, 267, 271; at Surat Congress (1907), 78, 79, 82, 86; at Lucknow Congress, 151, 155-6; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 198, 199, 203; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 375
 Bapat, Sadashiv Vaman, 386
 Baptista, Joseph, 104, 236, 390, 396, 401, 443
 Bardoli Conference, 545; resolution to launch Civil Disobedience, 546; Conference decisions, 567-72
 Bari, Abdul, 450
 Baroda Literary Conference, 133-7
 Barve, Madhavrao, 93
 Basu, Bhupendranath, 87
 Batty, 55, 74, 93
 Bedarkar, Khanderao Chimanrao, 7
 Belgaumwala, 247
 Bengal, partition of, 75
Bengalee, 577
 Bentinck, Lord William, 23
 Besant, Mrs. Annie, 25, 44, 47, 152, 169, 194, 202, 203, 215, 216, 237, 270, 504, 521; at Lucknow Congress (1916), 157-8; interned, 170; suggests Home Rule League deputation, 193; on effect of war on human evolution, 194-5; President, Calcutta Congress (1917), 196, 198-9; at Bombay Congress Special Session (1918), 204, 207, 208-9, 210; leads deputation to Montagu and Chelmsford, 213; 'Stand up Parantape', 274; at Amritsar Congress (1919), 304-5, 310, 312; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 375, 396, 404; on non-cooperation, 477-8
 Bhabha (Senior), 456

BAHADURJI, 55, 140, 170 215,

- Bhagwat Gita*, 25, 36, 443
 Bhandarkar, R. G., 134, 135, 385
 Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal, 436
 Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 123
 Bharucha, Barorji Framji, 438, 450
 Bhal, M. D., 31
 Bhatc, G. S., 133
 Bhaikhande, Vishnupant, 186, 187
 Bhopalkar, 481
 Bhosale, 436
 Bhownugroo, Sir M., 52, 53
 Bhuigi, 193, 527
 Birkenhead, Lord, 573, 583
 Birrel, Augustine, 40
 Bishnudas, Harchandrai, 204
 Blavatsky, Madame, 47
 Bodas, Rajaram Shastri, 17
 Bomanji, S. R., 202, 203, 249, 250, 310, 319, 522, 558
 Bombay, plague in, 19-20, 204; riots in, 467
 Bombay Association, 131-2
Bombay Chronicle, 133, 168, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 236, 254, 267, 274, 327, 329, 388, 401, 445, 446, 483, 513, 535; under official censorship, 237, 238-42; precursorship withdrawn, 242-3, 244; in financial chaos, 245-6; libel suit against, 246; on Bardoli Conference, 572, 577-9
Bombay Gazette, 87
 Bombay Presidency Association, 132; meeting to protest against deportation of Horniman, 235-6
 Bombay Presidency Press Association, 251
 Bombay Presidency Students' Federation, 437
 Bombay Students' Brotherhood, 124-6, 388
 Bonar Law, 157
 Borkar, 453
 Bose, J. C., 254
 Boswell, 321
 Brahman Sabha, 441, 442
 Branson, 94, 95, 97, 101, 102
 Brelvi, S. A., 204, 215, 243, 244, 246
 Brockway, Fenner, 429
 Broderick, 53
 Broomfield, 594
 Brougham, 53
 Bryce, Lord, 64
 Buckley, 41
 Buckmaster, Lord, 42
 Buddha Vardhak Hindu Sabha, 127
 Buva, Balkrishna, 185, 186
 Buva, Bhaskar, 186
 Byrne, 41, 45
 CAIRD, DR EDWARD, 38
 Calcutta, 150, 195, 390
 Cama, N. M., 247
 Cambon, Paul, 113
Capital, 88
 Cassum, Abdul, 204
 'Caucus', Bombay, 70; see also Standard Time
 Chagla, 124-5
 Chailanya, 346
 Chakravarti, B., 300, 303-4
 Chakravarti, Shyamsunder, 506, 513
 Chandavarkar, Narayan, 104, 123, 124, 211, 218, 250, 251, 253, 381
 Chaudharani, Sarala Devi, 335; letter to Jayakar, 589
 Chauri Chaura, 555, 557
 Chelmsford, Lord, 213, 214, 226, 270, 301, 305, 363; relieved of post, 435
 Chhotani, Mia Haji, 560
 Chirol, Valentine, 118
 Choubal, Mahadeo, 119, 261; proposes extending Secondary School course, 262-4
 Choudhary, Sir Ashutosh, 393, 417
 Choudhry, Rambhuj Dutt, 319
 Chowkar, Bhansaheb, 452, 453
Christian Democratic Weekly, 439
 Chunna, 186
Civil and Military Gazette, 571
 Commercial Press, 327
 Congress, Indian National, 132, 150, 173, 404, 501; Calcutta Session, 76-7; Surat Session (1907), 77-84; Constitution for, 84-6; entente with Muslim League, 139-40; Lucknow Session (1916), 150-9; Lucknow Pact, 159, 160-1; Calcutta Session (1917), 195-203; Bombay Special Session (1918), 204-10; Congress deputation, 210, 212, 213; Manifesto to appeal to redeem pledge of freedom, 225-6; AICC appoints Committee to agitate against Rowlatt Bills, 274-5; Punjab Sub-Committee appoints Com-

- mittee to inquire into Jallianwala Bagh incidents, 277; conclusions, 293-4; Amritsar Session (1919), 298-314; resolution to impeach O'Dwyer, 337; Punjab Relief Fund, 338-44; Nagpur Session, 375; Calcutta Session, 390, 393-401; Nagpur Session (1920), 406-421; effect of Mulshi Peta agitation on, 463; Ahmedabad Session (1921), 486-99; observations on Ahmedabad Session, 501, 502; Working Committee meets to start Civil Disobedience, 546; Working Committee stops Civil Disobedience, 558; Resolutions of the Committee, 558-60; AICC considers Bardoli Resolutions, 579-80; AICC (Lucknow) appoints Civil Disobedience Committee, 604; Report, 605-12; recommendations, 612-4
 Coupland, Sir Reginald, 160
 Crerar, J., 191, 238; correspondence with Jinnah on precensorship of *Bombay Chronicle*, 239-41
 Cripps, Sir Stafford, 360
 Cuffe, 234
 Cursetji, C. M., 236
 Curtis, Lionel, 39
 Curzon, Lord, 68, 74, 75, 159

 DABHOLKAR, SHANTARAM NARAYAN, 123, 245
 Daftary, K. R., 123
Daily Mail, 111
Daily News, 115, 575
Daily Telegraph, 575
 Daji, Bhau, 126, 128, 132
 Dandekar, 454
 Das, C. R., 185, 247, 277, 308, 309, 312, 315, 328, 329, 332, 333, 344-347, 355, 366, 367, 376, 505, 507, 508, 510, 512, 513, 514; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 190, 201; at Bombay Congress Special session (1918), 204; at Amritsar Congress (1919), 305-6; joins non-cooperation movement, 374; at Calcutta Congress, 393, 396; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 407, 419-20; arrested, 485; message to Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 488, 489-91; conditions to accept holding Round Table Conference, 506; on Gandhi's rejection of Round Table Conference, 509
 Das, Krishna, 509-513
 Daulatram, Jayaramdas, 450
 Davar, 93, 94, 97, 100, 101, 102, 103
 Dawson, Sir Geoffrey, 44
 Dayalji, 456
 Deccan Ryots Association, 214
 Democratic Party, 403
 Deochand, Gulabchand, 405
 Deodhar, G. K., 27
 Deodhikar, 455, 456
 Deole, 452
 Desai, Bhulabhai, 140, 192, 267
 Desai, Mahadeo, 236
 Deshmukh, Chintaman, 31
 Deshpande, 390
 Deshpande, Gangadhararao, 376-7; joins non-cooperation movement, 450
 Devachake, 452, 453
 Devi, Basant, 489
 Devi, Sarala, 319
 Devi, Sushila, 319
 Dhakji, Dadaji, 32
 Dharadhar, S. R., 26
 Dhingra, Madanlal, 116
 Digambar, Vishnu, 186, 187, 487
 Digby, William, 23, 24
 Dilke, Sir Charles, 53
Dnyanaprakash, 445, 477
 Dwarakadas, Jamnadas, 125, 193, 238, 267, 273, 274, 317-8, 381, 390, 405, 504, 505, 506, 507
 Dwarakadas, Kanji, 390, 406
 Dyer, see Jallianwala Bagh

 EDWARDS, S. M., 15 fn.
 Egypt, 234
Englishman, 576
 Excelsior Theatre, 235
 Extremists, 88

 FAIZ, 186
 Faki, Maulana Syed Mahomed, 495
 Famine Commission, 220
 Faridpur, 345
Federated India, 343
 Federated Press of India, 342, 343
 Finlay, Lord, 402
 Florence Nightingale, 218
 French Press on Savarkar's escape, 109

GAIKWAD, SIR SAYAJIRAO, 133, 134, 137

Gaekwad, Sampatrao, 134

Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, 187

Gandhi, Devadas, 470

Gandhi, M. K., 84, 89, 102, 122, 155, 192, 245, 270, 272, 281, 295, 300, 310, 311, 312, 315, 325, 327, 328, 329, 335-337, 345, 352-362, 363, 365-366, 374, 383, 402, 403, 422, 425, 426, 427, 433, 435, 436, 437, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 450, 451-452, 455, 456, 462, 467, 476, 477, 478, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 503, 524, 535, 545, 561, 570, 571; Kaira satyagraha, 219, 220, 221, 222; protests against Horniman's deportation, Rowlatt legislation, 234-235; 'Young India', 237; Indian Press Act (1910), 252, 253; arrested, 274; at Amritsar Congress (1919-20), 298, 304, 307, 308-9; Gokhale on, 317; opposition to enter into Home Rule League of, 316, 317-8; attends Congress, Punjab Inquiry Commission, 320, 321-2, 323, 324; correspondence with Jayakar on the Report, 332, 334; doctrine of non-cooperation, 368; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 375; spreads doctrine of non-cooperation, 375-379; difference with Tilak on non-cooperation, 385, 386-388; at Calcutta Congress (1920), 390; resolution on non-cooperation, 391-392, 393-395; renames Home Rule League, 405; Nagpur Congress (1920), 407, 414, 415, 420-1; Jayakar visits, 423-4; endorses Khilafat Resolution, 448-9; and Mulshi Peta agitation, 459-60; disturbed over riots in Bombay, 469-71; goes on fast, 480; at Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 481, 491, 494; controversy with Hazrat Mohani, 496-9; Jayakar on this controversy, 500-01; rejects Round Table Conference, 504-8; reaction to rejection of Round Table Conference, 509-17; 'Round Table Conference', 518-8; at Bombay Representative Conference, 519; at Malaviya Conference, 521-2, 525-6; reply to Shankaran Nair,

532-3; Natarajan on Gandhi-Shankaran Nair controversy, 533-5; 'Malaviya Conference', 539; on Shankaran Nair's withdrawal from Malaviya Conference, 539-40; ultimatum to Viceroy, 546; Viceroy refuses demands of, 549; reasons for issuing ultimatum, 554, 556; shocked at Chauri Chaura, 559, 561-564; at Delhi AICC meeting, 579-80; arrested, 586, 587-9; letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan, 591-2; trial of, 594-600; tributes to, 601-603

Gangubai, 186

Garibaldi, 112

Garibaldi, *Life of*, 429

Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island, 75 fn.

Gharpute, D. G., 31, 102

Gidwani, 428, 429-30

Girdharilal, 331

Gladstone, 53

Ghose, Motilal, 373

Ghosh, Aurobindo, 76, 133

Ghosh, Rashbihari, 83, 84, 86; President, Surat Congress (1907), 78-81

Ghosh, Motilal, 204, 589

Glencoe Massacre, 269

Golikery, 585

Gokhale, D. V., 450

Gokhale, G. K., 27, 65, 66, 78, 86, 98, 119, 133, 137, 138, 161, 316, 369, 606; third death anniversary, 217; on Gandhi, 317; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 375; Gandhi on, 385-6; 6th Anniversary of death of, 433; on students' participation in politics, 434-5

Gosse, Edmund, 45

Green, Sir Wilfred, 42, 43

Grey, Sir Edward, 113

Griffiths, 231, 233

Gujarat Sabha, 219, 220

Gujarati Dnyan Prasarak Sabha, 127, 128

Gunjekar, K. R., 31

Gupta, Shiva Prasad, 328

Gupte, 455

Gwyer, Maurice, 42

HAKSAR, KAILASNATH, 381

Haldane, Lord, 146, 148

- Hamilton, Lord George, 52
 Haq, Fazlul, 204, 277
 Hardic, Keir, 112
 Hardinge, Lord, 597
 Haridas, Nanubhai, 146
 Harkisanlal, 88, 204, 295, 319
 Harrison, 69; campaign against
 Pheroze Shah Mehta over Stand-
 ard Time, 70-72
 Hasan, Yakub, 204, 450
 Heaton, 104, 222
 Hegel, 146
Hindu, 568-9
 Home Rule League, 219, 261, 298,
 316, 317, 318; formed, 170;
 leaves War Conference, 192;
 passports denied to deputation,
 213; Bcsant Home Rule League
 waits on Montagu and Chelms-
 ford, 213, 214, 215; Manifesto
 to redeem pledge of freedom,
 225-6; protests against modifica-
 tions of Montagu-Chelmsford
 Scheme, 226; protests against
 Martial Law in the Punjab,
 227; opposes Memorial to Lord
 Willingdon, 247-50; opposes In-
 demnity Bill, 247; forms Home
 Rule Party, 260; opposes Row-
 latt Bills, 273, 274; renamed as
 Swarajya Sabha, 404, 405
 Hormusjee, 27
 Horniman, Benjamin Guy, 140,
 192, 238, 245, 251, 253-254, 267,
 274; deported, 227; reply to
 Montague's charges, 228-230;
 'How I Was Deported', 230-43;
 protest meeting against deporta-
 tion of, 235-6; attempts to
 remove restrictions on, 252
 Hunter Committee, 275-7, 303,
 304, 321, 338; Report, 368, 402
 Hunter, Lord, 275, 276, 277, 303
 Huq, Mazharul, 142, 144, 159, 273
 Husain, Wazir, 204
 Hussain, Syed, 193

 IMAM, SYED HASAN, 193, 527; Pre-
 sident, Bombay Special Con-
 gress (1918), 204, 206, 207; in
 Congress Deputation (1919),
 212
 Indemnity Bill, 247
Independent, 416, 487
Indian Daily News, 577
 Indian Newspaper Co., 238, 246

Indian Socialist, 105
Indian Social Reformer, 168, 477,
 478, 479; on Bardoli decision,
 569-70
Indian Unrest, 118
Indu Prakash, 169, 250, 329, 333,
 388, 477
 Inverarity, 2, 43, 95; on Congress
 Punjab Inquiry Commission
 Report, 324-325
 Isaacs, Sir Rufus (Lord Reading),
 43, 106
 Iyengar, Kasturiranga, 252, 274,
 487, 605, 613
 Iyengar, Ramaswamy, 212, 487
 Iyengar, Rangaswami, 321, 355,
 593, 609
 Iyengar, S. Srinivas, 487
 Iyer, V. Krishnaswamy, 86

 JACKSON, DR. A. M. T., 15, 116, 117
 Jadhav, B. V., 214
 Jagannathji, Vinayak, 132
 Jallianwala Bagh, 226, 209; massa-
 cre, 281-4; punishments, 286 ff.
 Jambhekar, Bal Shastri, 131
 Jambhekar, J. J., 131
Jame-Jamshed, 230, 250
 Jashbai, Manibhai, 7, 145
 Jaures, Jean, 110-11
 Jayakar, M. R., birth, 1; early
 childhood, 3, 6, 10-12; at
 school, 12-14; at college, 16-18;
 thinks of starting a school, 22,
 24, 25; teacher, Aryan Educa-
 tion High School, 28; marriage,
 29; interest in yoga philosophy,
 29; religious literature, 35-6;
 leaves for England, 37; returns
 due to illness, 38; takes LL.B.,
 38; leaves for England again,
 38; in England, 38-52; fails to
 get admission in Balliol Col-
 lege, 39; conferred D.C.L., 39;
 joins Romer's Chambers, 39;
 introduced to Ernest Udney and
 Mrs. Besant, 44; visit to Pandit
 Shyamji Krishnavarma, 46-47;
 on British family and social
 life, 47-51; first law examination
 in England, 53; on Indian and
 British methods of examination,
 53-4; called to Bar, 54; returns
 to Bombay, 54; begins legal
 career, 55; specialises in law of
 adoption, 56; first case, 57-8;

literary activity, 58, 59; paper on Dharmasashtra and Smriti, 58; Marathi stage, 60, 189; joins Chamber of British Senior Counsel, 61; early political cases, 61-3; on mental mould of the English and Indians, 64-5; refuses to join Servants of India Society, 66; on Indian Bar, 67-8; at Calcutta Congress, 76; at Sural Congress, 77; attempts rapprochement of Moderates and Extremists, 89-91; attends trial of Tilak, 92; attends trial of Shivram Mahaduo Puranjpe, 102; trial of Anant Kanhere, 117; resigns from Govt. Law School, 119; collaborates with Dinshaw Mulla's *Stridhan*, 119; retained Counsel for Hindu shrines, 120; Counsel for Indian States, 120-21; Fellowship of the University of Bombay, 121; contact with Sir P. M. Mehta, 122; *Purva Mimamsa*, 122; educational and social activities, 123, 125; attends Baroda Literary Conference, 133; connexion with *Bombay Chronicle*, 133; organises arts and crafts exhibition of Pethare Prabhu Community, 137; attempts to effect entente between Muslim League and Congress, 139; member, Sapru Committee, 160; agitates on behalf of Junior Bar, 161-162; at Nasik Political Conference (1917), 162-3; President, Nasik Social Conference, 163, 164-167; observations on speeches, 167-70, 172; visit to Bangalore, 173-4; President, Poona District Conference, 177-82; President, Hindusthani Music Conference, 187; Chairman, Theatrical Conference, 188-90; severs connexion with War Conference, 192; member, Home Rule League deputation, 193; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 195, 201-2, 203; at Bombay Special Congress (1918), 204, 207, 208, 209-10; unable to join Home Rule League deputation, 210; presides over send-off to Congress deputation, 212; member, Besant

Home Rule League deputation, 215; at Third Death Anniversary of Gokhale, 217; counsel to defend pleaders participating in Kaira Satyagraha, 222, 224; disapproves modifications of Montford Scheme, 226; protests against Martial Law in Punjab, 227; Director, *Bombay Chronicle*, 238; Chairman of Board of Directors, 242; meets Governor in connexion with conduct of *Bombay Chronicle*, 244; efforts to buy *Bombay Chronicle* for Swarajya Party, 247; Indemnity Bill, 247; opposes Memorial to Lord Willington, 248; Repeal of Press Act, 253; participates in student movement, 254-8; visit to Sind, 258-60; elected to Bombay Legislative Council (1919), 261; opposes extending secondary education course, 264-5; member, Indian Defence Forces Committee, 267; Rowlatt Bills, 273, 274; member, Punjab Sub-Committee of AICC, 277; demands impeachment of O'Dwyer, 294; at Amritsar Congress (1919), 302; Vice-President, Bombay Branch of Home Rule League, 316; opposes Gandhi's entry into Home Rule League, 316, 317, 318; on Congress Punjab Inquiry Commission, 319-25; publication of the Report, 326-35; Punjab Relief Fund, 338-44; Lajpat Rai's deputy in Nationalist Party in Delhi Legislative Assembly, 376; opposes Prince of Wales' visit to India, 381; tribute to Tilak, 388-9; at Calcutta Congress (1920), 390, 396-7; observation on speech, 402; resigns from Home Rule League, 405; visit to Saharmati, 423-4; suspends practice at High Court, 425; attempt to establish a National College, 425-30; attempt fails, 430; scheme of national education, 431-2; efforts to popularise national education, 433, 435-6; on possible influence of Gokhale on Gandhi, 433; donates to popularise Khaddar, 436; illness,

- 436; on Tilak's teachings, 437-8; speech at the Death Anniversary of Dadabhai Naoroji, 438-9; presides over meeting of Social Service League, 439; advocates introduction of regional language in college examinations, 440; at Non-Brahman Conference, 441-442; lectures on educational aspects of Gandhi movement, 444; observations on lecture on philosophic basis of non-cooperation, 445-6; visit to Ahmednagar, 452-3; resigns fellowship of University of Bombay, 453; tours Thana District, 454-6; intercedes in Tata-Mulshi Pota dispute, 456; presides over memorial meeting for Sir P. M. Mehta, 463-4; on riots in Bombay consequent to visit of Prince of Wales, 467-8; at Shahapur Conference, 472-7; observations on the speech, 477-81; at Akola Conference, 481-3; observations on speech, 483; at Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 486-7; on Gandhi-Mohani controversy, 500-01; attempts to effect reconciliation between Gandhi and Viceroy, 517-8, 520; letter to Gandhi on Vithalbhai Patel, 523-4; letter to Gandhi disapproving Civil Disobedience, 554-5; at Bardoli session of Congress Working Committee, 557-8, 560; Malaviya Conference Committee Meeting, 565, 567; unable to be at Delhi AICC meeting, 579, 585-6; invited to cooperate in Gandhi's constructive programme, 581-2; approves of Gandhi's programme, 582-5; letter to Saraladevi Chaudharani, 590; drops idea of forming new party, 594; tribute to Gandhi, 601-603
- Jeejibhoy, Sir Jamshedji, 132, 250
- Jehangir, Cowasji, 267
- Jenkins, Lawrence, 37, 40, 54, 55, 74, 93, 145
- Jinnah, M. A., 89, 90, 91, 124, 132, 161, 170, 192, 193, 203, 204, 210, 215, 238, 248, 271, 273, 274, 312, 316, 317, 390, 396, 401, 405, 433, 443, 504, 518, 527, 528, 543, 567, 586; backs out of Home Rule League deputation, 195; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 199, 200; correspondence with Crerar regarding precensorship of *Bombay Chronicle*, 239, 240-1, 242; Jinnah People's Memorial Hall, 251; at Amritsar Congress, 309-10; at Nagpur Congress, 407, 415-6, 417; at Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 486, 487; at Malaviya Conference, 521
- Joshi, Anna Mariand, 188
- Joshi, B. V., 94
- Joshi, V. R., 26, 28
- Justice*, 571
- KAIRA SATYAGRAHA, 222-5
- Kajiji, 222
- Kakewich, 41
- Kal, 99, 100, 101
- Kalelkar, D. B., 387
- Kaliquzzaman, 450
- Kamalabai, 129
- Kamat, B. S., 250
- Kamdar, Morarji, 406
- Kamgar Hiltavardhak Sabha, 214
- Kane, Mahamahopadhyaya P. V., 442
- Kanga, Jamshed, 55, 426
- Kanhere, Anant, 110-9
- Kant, 146
- Karandikar, 102, 215
- Karim, Abdul, 186
- Karulkar, 455
- Kelkar, N. C., 188, 215, 383, 390, 401, 403, 421, 443, 445, 447, 449, 450, 480, 481, 482
- Kemal Pasha, Gazi Mustafa, 496
- Kennedy, B. C., 223
- Korkar, Kesarbai, 186
- Kesari, 98, 378, 403, 445; opposes non-cooperation, 377
- Khadilkar, 134
- Khan, Alladiya, 188
- Khan, Bunder, 186
- Khan, Hafiz, 186
- Khan, Hakim Ajmal, 420, 450, 571, 590, 592, 604, 613; President, Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 487
- Khan, Murad, 186
- Khan, Rahimat, 186
- Khan, Sultan Ahmad, 321
- Khaparde, G. S., 102, 271, 371
- Khare, L. G., 481

- Kher, B. G., 125
 Khilafat, 301, 312-3, 388, 448;
 All-India Khilafat Conference
 (1921), 447
 Khusru, Amir, 186
 Kidwai, M. H., 450
 Kirloskar, 188
 Kirtikar, K. R., 134
 Kirtikar, Vasudeva Jagannath,
 1-2, 129, 144-147; retired from
 office, 2; death, 2; views
 about state service, 7-8; rejects
 Prime Ministership of Baroda,
 8; defence of Malharrao Gaik-
 wad, 8-9; *Some Aspects of*
 Vedanta, 147, 148
 Kitchlew, Dr., 279, 395, 509
 Knight, Holford, 406, 407
 Kolaba District, 221
 Kolhatkar, Bhaurao, 186
 Kossuth, 111, 112
 Kothare, A. P., 26
 Kothare, N. N., 27, 123
 Kothare, R. N., 26
 Kothari, V. R., 214
 Kothari, Walchand R., 441
 Krishna, Balchandra, 69
 Krishnavarma, Pandit Shyamji,
 45-46
 Kropotkin, 115
 Kunzru, Hridayanath, 504, 505,
 506, 522; at Lucknow Congress
 (1916), 156-7

 LABOUR PARTY, British, 404, 417
L'Humanité, 110, 111
 Lal, Manohar, 290
 Lalaji, 508, 509
 Lallubhai, Chhabildas, 46
Leader, 132, 477, 479, 569
 Leinor, Dr., 369
 Lemon, Mark, 39
 Liberal Party, 236
Life of Tilak, 383, 403
 Lindlay, Lord Justice, 245
 Lloyd, Sir George, 229, 231, 244,
 469
Lokamanya, 477
 Lonavala, 19, 177
 Lothian, Marquess of, 39
 Lotwala, 125
'Loyalty', 382
 Lucknow, 150

 MACAULAY, 22, 444
 Macleod, 222, 426
 Macpherson, 2
 Madgaonkar, G. N., 131-2
 Madhavrao, Scindia, 381, 382
 Madras, 86
 Mahalaxmiwalla, J. D., 238, 244,
 245
 Mahamudabad, Raja of, 193, 204
Maharashtra Mofat Vachanalaya,
 436
Malvatta, 143, 377
 Mahzar-ul-Huq, 142, 144, 159, 273
 Majid, Maulana Abdul, 495
 Malaviya Conference, 525-527;
 Committee's correspondence
 with Viceroy, 541-544; Viceroy
 rejects terms of, 544, 549-50,
 552-3; reply to Govt. commu-
 nique, 550-1
 Malaviya, Madan Mohan, 86, 89,
 204, 207, 271, 273, 274, 302, 303,
 315, 319, 327, 328-9, 352, 362-3,
 366, 368, 381, 382, 396, 443, 504,
 505, 507, 508, 510, 511, 512, 513,
 514, 518, 524, 527, 555, 557, 560,
 567, 583, 590, 592, 594; at Cal-
 cutta Congress (1917), 202-03;
 sceptical of doctrine of non-co-
 operation, 371; joins non-co-
 operation movement, 376; at
 Nagpur Congress (1920), 407,
 417, 420; at Ahmedabad Con-
 gress, 486, 487; controversy over
 part of, in securing Round
 Table Conference, 515-7
 Malot, Sir Louis, 438
 Malvi, Tribhuvandas, 78, 79, 86
Manchester Guardian, 115, 228
 Mandalay, 98
 Mandlik, Vishwanath Narayan, 2,
 146
 Maratha Education Society, 27
 Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Sabha,
 127
 Martin, 557
 Martial Law Commission, 280
 Masani, R. P., 250
 Master, Nagindas, 405
 Mavlankar, G. V., 31
 Mazzini, 111, 429
 Mehta, Sir Chimanlal V., 27
 Mehta, Jamnadas, 406
 Mehta, Sir Pherozeshah, 47, 81,
 82, 83, 86, 87, 89, 122, 133, 138,
 227, 385, 463-464, 473; secures
 rejection of Standard Time 68-
 70; opposition to, 70-1; election

- to Bombay Municipal Corporation, 70-4; at Calcutta Congress (1905), 76, 79; refuses presidency of Lahore Congress, 88; sceptical of doctrine of non-cooperation, 371; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 375
- Meston, Lady, 155
- Meston, Sir James 154-5
- Minorities Pact, 361
- Mirza, 125
- Mishra, Gokaran Nath, 204, 337, 395, 522
- Miyajan, 186
- Modak, Waman Abaji, 12
- Moderates, 87, 88, 203-4
- Modern Review*, 451
- Mody, H. P., 236, 248, 250, 261
- Moghubai, 186
- Mohani, Hazrat, 420, 450, 500, 501; at Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 496-9
- Montagu, 175, 195, 197, 226, 229, 230, 247, 301, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 402, 416, 583; arrives in India, 176; Report on Indian Constitution Reforms, 203, 207, 213; deputations waiting on, 214; interview with Home Rule League, 215-6; on Horniman's deportation, 228; resigns, 586
- Montagu-Chelmsford Report, 203-4, 205, 208, 210
- Montagu Reforms Act, 403
- Moonje, Dr., 314, 414, 450; Hon. Gen. Secretary of Congress, 406; in Mulshi Peta agitation, 460-1; moves vote of censure against Gandhi, 580
- Moos, Ardeshir F., 126
- Morarji, Narotam, 195, 267, 381
- Morarji, Ratansey, 212
- Morley, Lord, 88, 153, 206
- Morley-Minto Reforms, 160
- Morning Post*, 112, 416, 576
- Moulton, Lord Justice Fletcher, 106
- Mukherjee, Sir Ashutosh, 373-4, 473
- Mulla, Dinshaw, 119
- Mulshi Peta agitation, 455, 456-62
- Munshi, K. M., 236, 273, 406
- Munsiff, R. G., 406
- Music, Hindustani, 184, 185, 187
- Muslim League, 139-40, 142-3, 200, 206, 210, 211
- Muslim Students' Convention, 255
- Muzumdar, Ambikacharan, 150-6
- NADIAN, 221
- Nagpur, 77, 375, 406
- Naidu, Sarojini, 124, 125, 203, 204, 443, 450, 466, 481; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 202; tribute to Gandhi, 601
- Nair, Sir Shankaran, Chairman, Malaviya Conference, 521; leaves Conference, 525; on Gandhi's attitude towards holding Round Table Conference, 528-32; Gandhi's reply to, 532-3; Natarajan on Gandhi's controversy with, 533-5; Gandhi on withdrawal of, from Malaviya Conference, 539-40
- Nana, 130
- Nanabhai, Bhaishankar, 74
- Nanavaty, Hiralal, 405
- Nanavaty, Manilal, 406
- Naoroji, Dadabhai, 74, 76, 126, 158, 385; death, 170; Death Anniversary (1921), 438-9
- Narainlal, Jagat, 276
- Narayan, Jagat, 150, 151, 321
- Narayan, Shantaram, 2, 4, 146
- Nariman, G. K., 245
- Narsamaier, B. V., 193
- Nasik, 116, 162
- Natarajan, K., 168, 253-4, 267, 381, 518, 527, 543, 557; on Gandhi-Shankaran Nair controversy, 533-5
- Nation and the Athenaeum*, 511
- Nationalist Party, 347, 376
- Navajivan*, 237
- Navalkar, R. S., 26
- Nayak, Dr. S. B., 26, 27
- Nehru, Jawaharlal, 321, 328, 339-340, 450, 508, 561; letters to Jayakar on the Congress Punjab Inquiry Commission's Report, 331, 341, 342, 343, Punjab Relief Fund, 341, 342, 343
- Nehru, Motilal, 79, 204, 207, 274, 277, 315, 319, 320, 321, 322, 324, 328, 329, 337, 342, 347-352, 366, 375, 437, 450, 508, 613; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 408, 419, 421; protests against stopping Civil Disobedience, 581; member, Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee, 604

- Nehru, Shyamlal, 395
 Nevinston, 81, 82
New India, 477
New Organisational Pattern, 266-7
 Non-Cooperation, 388, 442, 443, 488-9; movement, 368; reactions to doctrine of, 370-5; discussion on at Calcutta Congress (1920), 390; resolution on, 391-2, 393, 394, 395-7; reaction of Provincial Congress Committees to, 397-8; resolution at Nagpur Congress (1920), 421; *see also* Ahmedabad Congress
- O'DWYER, SIR MICHAEL, 229, 253, 281, 286, 293, 295, 299, 300-1, 305, 323, 337, 338, 364, 368, 391, 402, 529; Defence of India Act, 269-70; orders deportation of Kitchlew and Satyapal, 279
 Ormsby-Gore, Major, 161
- PADDDRI, R. S., 31
 Padhye, Dr. K. D., 481
 Pandya, Chandrashankar, 406
 Pakwasa, Mangaldas, 406
 Pakwasa, Y. M., 406
 Pal, Bipinchandra, 203, 270, 313, 390, 393; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 199, 200; at Bombay special Congress, 204, 207; Congress Deputation (1919), 212; at Amritsar Congress (1919), 311; at Calcutta Congress (1920), 393-6, 399; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 407, 420
 Palande, Bhaskar D., 126
 Pangarkar, 134
 Paranjpye, R. P., 124, 433
 Paranjpe, Shivaram Mahadeo, 99-103
 Parashram, Dr., 329, 334
 Parekh, Gokuldas, 214, 220, 250
 Parsee Rajakceya Sabha, 438, 463
 Patel, Vilhabhai, 204, 219, 220, 271, 274, 421, 427, 428, 443, 449, 450, 525, 558, 613; on Montagu-Chelmsford Report, 205-6, 207; at Ahmedabad Congress (1921), 487, 488, 495; at Malaviya Conference, 522; presides over Bardoli Conference, 545; member, Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee, 605
 Pathare Prabhu Social Samaj, 14, 16
Pathway to Reality, 148
 Patton, Prof. Joseph, 127
 Percy, Earl, 52
 Perry, Sir Erskine, 128
 Petit, Dinshaw, 235, 527
 Petit, J. B., 250, 267, 326, 338
 Plague, 19-20, 204
 Poona, District Conference (1918) 177-84; Pact, 346, 361
 Poldar, 452
 Prabhus, 15-16; Seminary, 129; Arts & Crafts Exhibition of, 137-8
Praja Mitra, 477, 479
 Prasad, Rajendra, 450; joins non-cooperation movement, 371
 Pratt, 219, 220, 221, 222
 Presidency Students' Federation, 225-7
 Press Act, 251-3
 Press Association of India, 251-3
 Prince of Wales, 381; agitation against visit of, 464 ff.
Prosperous British India, 23
Punch (Hindi), 169
 Punjab, 226, 227, 229, 269
 'Pussyfoot' Johnson, 439
- RADCLIFFE, SIR CYRIL, 43
 Rahimtoola, Ibrahim, 140, 250
 Rai, Lala Lajpat, 77, 337, 347, 376, 402, 406, 422, 450; sceptical of non-cooperation doctrine, 371; President, Calcutta Congress (1920), 390, 399-400; Nagpur Congress (1920), 414, 420; in jail, protests against stopping of civil disobedience movement, 561
 Rajagopalachari, C., 204, 450, 604
 Rajahansa, Narayanarao, 186
 Ramakrishna Paramahansa, 25
 Ramji, Chanda, 123
 Ranade, Mahadeo Govind, 34-5, 89, 122
 Ranji, 43-44
 Rankin, on Hunter Committee, 276, 288, 321
 Rao, Laxmana, 174
 Rao, V. P. Madhav, 134, 135-6
 Ray, P. C., 527
 Reading, Lord, 345, 466, 508, 510.

- 512, 515, 516, 546, 587; Viceroy of India, 435; offers to call Round Table Conference, 504; reply to deputation led by Malaviya, 517
- Recollections*, 88
- Recollections and Reflections*, 467, 468, 469
- Reddi, C. Ramalinga, 133
- Reed, Sir Stanley, 167, 248
- Roid, Professor Richard T., 127, 128
- Reminiscence and Reflections*, 469
- Rise of Bombay*, 15 fn.
- Romer, Right Hon'ble, Lord, 9
- Romer, Mark L., 39
- Romer, Sir Robert, 39
- Round Table Conference, 504, 505
- Rowlatt, 106, 271
- Rowlatt Act, 234, 237, 271, 299, 277-8; agitation, 273-275; passed, 273
- Roy, K. C., 331
- Royal Proclamation, 295-8
- Rupram, Mahipatram, 145
-
- SAHA, GOPINATH, 347
- Sakarlal, Ambalal, 7, 78, 86
- Salt Act, 347
- Sarnaldas, Lallubhai, 381
- Samarth, N. M., 90-91, 140, 217, 267
- Sandesh*, 169
- Sane Guruji, 3
- Sangit Kalavihar*, 186
- Sanjanwala, 455
- Sanlanam, K., 277, 320, 330, 335, 367
- Sapru, 271, 504, 505, 508
- Saptarshi, 453
- Sarabhai, Ambalal, 238, 487, 518, 552
- Sarabhai, Bholanath, 145
- Sathaye, 390, 481
- Satyamurti, 204, 396, 487, 523, 593, 610
- Satyapal, 279
- Savarkar, Ganesh Damodar, 103
- Savarkar, Vinayak Damodar, 103, 104-110, 111, 112, 113, 114
- Sayani, Rahimtoola M., 140
- Scott, 104, 105, 110, 162, 169
- Sedition Committee, 271
- Son, Narendranath, 86
- Servant*, 510, 514
- Servants of India Society, 65, 217, 316
- Setalwad, Chimanlal, 89, 90, 91, 140, 192, 211; Counsel to defend pleaders participating in Kaira Satyagraha, 222, 223-4; on Hunter Committee, 276, 277, 321; on disturbances in Bombay consequent to visit of Prince of Wales, 450, 467, 469
- Sethna, Pheroze, 250
- Shah, Lallubhai, 170
- Shahapur Conference (1921), 471-7, 480-1
- Shankaracharya, of Sarada Peth, 420, 495
- Shankarseth, Jagannath (Nana Shankarseth), 126, 128; Social and political activities, 130-2
- Shastri, Shrinivas, 252, 273; President, Nasik Political Conference, 162; opposes Rowlatt Bill, 271-2
- Shinde, R. G., 214
- Shivale, Jaun Ahmed, 558
- Shradhanandaji, Swami, 299, 304
- Shriramji, 481
- Shroff, Chhotatal, 454
- Sind Bloc, 258
- Sinha, Lord, 310
- Sinha, Sir S. P., 138, 140, 141, 144
- Sinn Feinn, 76
- Sitaramayya, Pattabhi, 193
- Smith, Major, 321
- Sobhani, Umar, 133, 238, 284, 317, 327, 390, 450
- Social Service League, 439
- Sociologist*, 47, 116
- Some Aspects of Vedant*, 147
- Spectator*, 132
- Spoor, Ben, 406, 407, at Nagpur Congress (1920), 417-419
- Standard Time, controversy over, 68-70
- Statesman*, 227
- Stead's View*, 512
- Strangman, 594
- Street, Col. 231
- Stridhan*, 119
- Students' Federation, 258
- Students' Literary and Scientific Society, 126, 127, 128, 129
- Surat, 77, 82
- Swami, Shridhar, 35, 36
- Swraj Party, 340, 347
- Swarajya Sabha, 318, 404, 405

Sydenham, Lord, 309

TAGORE, RABINDRANATH, 254, 346, 422; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 196, 197; on non-cooperation, 373; opposes Gandhi's Manifesto, 451

Tai Maharaja (Baba Maharaj), 93

Talpade, M. N., 31

Tata Company, Mulshi Peta dispute, 457 ff.

Tatva Vivechak Press, 327

Tekchand, Bakshi, 320

Telang, Kashinath Trimbak, 2

Telang, P. K., 193

Tendulkar, D. G., 384

Thackeray, William, 23

Thackersey, Hansraj Pragi, 406

Thackerscy, Vithaldas, 250, 267

Thakur, Vinayak Harischandra, 24

Thakurdas, Purshotamdas, 250, 518

Thompson, Dr. Edward, 39

Tilak, B. G., 89, 100, 103, 122, 167, 195, 210, 212, 215, 270, 298, 316, 375, 377, 378, 385, 388-9, 401, 403, 406, 440; adoption case, 57-8; at Surat Congress, 79-82; trial of, 92-8; at Lucknow Congress (1916), 158-9; Lucknow Pact, 161; Nasik Political and Social Conferences, 163; War Conference, 191, 192, 216; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 199, 200-01, 203; at Bombay Special Congress (1918), 204, 207; on Kaira situation, 221; at Amritsar Congress (1919), 306-7, 308, 309, 312; sceptical of non-cooperation, 371; Tilak Mahavidyalaya, 379; death of, 382-3; views on non-cooperation, 384, 386; attitude towards Khilafat, 388; memorial meeting for, 437

Tilak, N. M., 134

Tilbury, 234

Times (London), 110, 112, 154

Times of India, 126, 167, 208, 329, 515; on Congress, 87-8; on Indian students, 91-2; on Gandhi's attitude towards settlement with Lord Reading, 536; on Bardoli decisions, 568

Tolstoy, 354

Tribune, 290, 478, 569

Trichanapalli, 448

Trilokekar, S. S., 26, 188

Tucker, Gordon, 231

Turkhud, B. S., 124

Tyabji, Abbas, 204, 277, 319, 320, 329, 363-364, 365, 367, 450

Tyabji, Badruddin, 140, 236, 363, 385

Tyabji, Faiz, 236, 254

UDNEY, ERNEST, 44-45

Umashankar Lalshankar, 145

VAIDYA, C. V., 134, 135, 274

Vaidya, Gajanan Bhaskar, 129

Vakil, Chotubhai, 406

Vartak, Govindrao, 454

Vaze, Ramakrishna Buva, 186

Velinkar, 261

Velkar, Narayan Dinanath, 126, 390, 481

Venkatram, 246

Vibhakar, N. B., 406

Vijayaraghavacharya, C., 204, 252, 422, 538, 566, 594; President, Nagpur Congress (1920), 406, 407, 408-13

Vinceni, Sir William, 583

Visvesvaraya, M., 173, 527, 528; Chairman, Malaviya Conference 525

Viswanath, Rao Bahadur, 146

Vivekanand, 25, 47

Voice of India, 509, 515

Vyankalpatti, 193

WADIA, D. E., 86, 89, 90, 91, 122, 204, 220, 251; at 13th Session of Indian National Congress, 138, 140-1; sceptical of doctrine of non-cooperation, 371

Wadia, B. P., 170; at Calcutta Congress (1917), 202, 203

Wadia, H. A., 217

Wadia, Hormusjee, 218, 250, 267, 522, 544

Wadia, P. A., 125

War Conference, 190-2, 267

War Purposes Board, 267, 268

Ward, Barrington, 44

Wavell, Lord, 360

Webb, Maurice, 239

Wedderburn, Sir William, 218

Wedgwood, Col., 228, 406, 407; at Nagpur Congress (1920), 416-7

- Welinkar, Narayan, 125
Westminster Gazette, 576
 Whitenack, 133-134
 Wilkinson, 444
 Williams, Lord Justice Vaughan,
 41-2, 106, 107
 Willingdon, Lord, 191, 192, 264;
 agitation against Memorial for,
 247-50
 Wilson, Horace, 189
 Wood, Sir Charles, 444
 Wylie, Curzon, 116
Young India, 237, 451, 459, 484,
 518, 519, 537, 539, 562, 580, 585
 ZALKIKAR, 17
 Zulpiwali, Krishni, 186